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"Forbidden."

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"LED ON," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE COST OF A WEDDING RING.

It was given out that Lady Falconer was confined to her room with a bad cold, and the announcement was received with every appearance of true sympathy, especially by Townshend-Rivers.

"So imprudent to go out in an open carriage so late in the year as this," he remarked to Lady Crosby, as they were sitting side by side at dinner.

"I don't suppose she had ever done such a thing before," Millie said, demurely, as she consumed a few mouthfuls of clear soup.

"Well, I don't know about that; as a rule, women are far more imprudent than men. I hope she is not delicate on her chest."

"Perhaps she is delicate in her temper," she said in a low voice. "I should be if I were married to that man," with a mischievous glance across the table at Falconer.

At the same moment, Lady Malvern leant forward and addressed her nephew. "If you are at all anxious about your wife, I can send a groom at once for Dr. Robins."

Falconer looked down at his soup-plate, and said gruffly, "Not at all necessary, thanks. I am not in the least anxious."

"Anxious? No. I bet that he never is anxious about anybody except himself," muttered Hugh to his neighbour, Major Mortimer.

"Selfish brute," agreed the Major. "Some women are never satisfied until they get hold of a regular devil."

"Lady Falconer's not that sort."

"And yet she had him."

"His cursed good looks did it."

Major Mortimer smiled, and pulled his moustaches, as he glanced at Millie Crosby, on the other side of him. If he had been an ugly man, she would have turned a cold shoulder on him at once, and never troubled herself to think twice about him. He was perfectly aware of this, and yet it did not lower her in his estimation, though he thought Lady Falconer "a poor little fool" for loving a man for the same reason.

"You must not judge her," Pemberton broke out after a pause. "My uncle tells me that there was a conspiracy of silence amongst all *his* relations. They were keen about getting him settled, and they did not care for anything else. An infernal shame!"

"It's being done every day of the week. The 'Marriages made in Heaven' theory is about exploded in the nineteenth century," he said carelessly, thankful that he himself was free from the tangles and perplexities of married life; and yet the next moment he was talking to the lovely Millie and imagining himself in despair because of Sir Digby's undoubted existence.

Hugh had to give the rest of his attention to Mrs. Jocelyn, whose temper had been upset by waiting half an-hour for dinner; but he was in a state of uncomfortable anxiety about Beatrice. He had seen her at five o'clock tea, and noticed no sign of cold or indisposition of any sort. He was, therefore, convinced that the cold was a fiction, to cover something serious in the background. He kept studying the husband's face as the wife's was out of reach, and every now and then he was favoured with an angry stare, as if Falconer especially resented his silent scrutiny. As he was the only old friend that Beatrice had in the house, he felt a certain responsibility about her, and yet it was almost impossible for him to help her in any way, without giving rise to invidious remarks. If he had been old and haggard instead of young and *not* hideous, his position would have been safe enough; but if he stood forth as her champion it was absolutely certain that his motives would be suspected, and no one amongst that frivolous set would credit him with being a simple old friend, and not a lover.

Whilst many people were speculating about her—some kindly, others curiously, some audaciously, others carelessly—Beatrice was sitting in the welcome solitude of a small sitting-room, which

opened out of her dressing-room, and belonged to her own suite of rooms. There she could be safe from all interruption. She could pace up and down in her wild despair, or fling herself face downwards on the sofa, without any curious eye to watch and wonder. Her mind had recovered from its stagnation, her brain was in a whirl of bitter anger, and frantic disappointment—the tranquil unthinking peace of girlhood had gone for ever. A cyclone had passed over her young life, and prematurely withered all its verdure. What had been a garden stocked with richest blossoms and choicest fruits, was now nothing but an empty waste. The change was so startling that at first she could not think connectedly. From her childhood she had been treated with nothing but considerate love, the most careful tenderness. If she did naughty things, as any child with a scrap of spirit must occasionally, she was scolded with gravity and gentleness, that made her at once deeply penitent for her faults and willing to hear any punishment. Nobody had ever stormed at her, or accused her of falsehood, meanness or deceit, until her husband initiated her into this unpleasant experience. Her own husband—there was the sharpest poison of the sting—the man whom she had loved so idiotically, and to whom she had actually given the preference over all her other friends. Not only had he been guilty of an abominable action, not only had he seemed to be perfectly callous about the blasting effect of this action—but he had also thought *her* capable of conduct that was mean and detestable; and moreover thought her so, without the smallest excuse for the accusation. Her tenderest, holiest feelings had been used by him like a field to be ploughed, for he had driven the harrow over them all. They were deeply scarred, and the scar would remain till her life ended. Mental or moral scars are just as long-lived as the physical ones which, as scientists tell us, endure through all the changes of an organic body. She could never forget what she had heard of the past. Must she live in constant dread of the future? Any day there might be another case like Gerald de Winton's, or another scene like that of this afternoon. She shuddered as she thought of it, not with fear, but with the still worse shiver of disgust and loathing. Her first wild impulse was to go to her father, like a wounded bird to its nest. She cared for nothing but to put miles between herself and her husband. To get away from him to some

safe place where he would not venture to come near her, that was her only object. Her face softened as she thought of the home where she would always be so dearly welcome, where such never-failing love was always waiting for her. A home where cruelty and coarseness were unknown quantities—a home where the door was shut sternly in the face of vice, but opened its widest to admit the bent form of sorrow or misfortune. Yes, she would go there and find a shelter from the storm—this unexpected, monstrous storm which had overwhelmed her. The first thing to-morrow, she would send off a telegram to her father, and follow it by the next train. Lady Malvern was good at lies. She could invent any plausible fiction she chose to explain her niece's sudden journey, but as for herself, she would start before all the lazy people came downstairs, and so avoid any inconvenient questions. Stopping in her incessant tramp up and down the room, she went to her writing-case—a very smart one, which had come amongst her wedding presents—to find a form; but when found, and when her pen was already dipped in the ink, she hesitated. "Duty" was the Bishop's watch-word. What would he say to her if she ran away from her husband, because she discovered that he was a very different man to the one she had created out of her own fancy? Would not he tell her that she had married Herbert Clifford, Earl of Falconer, the real man—not the imaginary hero—that she had sworn to love, honour and obey him? If love were worn-out-reverence and impossibility—he would tell her that obedience remained—and he would send her back. She could see the pained look in his kind strong face, she could hear the sorrowful tone in his musical voice. It would cost him an immense effort, but if he thought it his duty to show her hers, he would do it at any cost. "Poor old Daddy, it would break his heart to see me to-day!" Tears filled her eyes as she thought of him—the father who had never come down by the slightest fraction from the pedestal on which she had placed him in her motherless childhood. She thought of her wedding morning when he had begged her to give up Falconer at the last moment, if she had the slightest doubt of him. Many men would have shrunk from the fuss and the gossip which would have been the inevitable consequences of such a sensational rupture, but he counted them as nothing in comparison with his child's happiness. Oh, why had she ever been such an idiot as to leave him!

Long she sat there thinking—thinking—till the burthen of her thoughts grew too much for her. She could not go downstairs to seek distraction, she could not read, because in the present absorbed state of her mind, no book would have made the smallest impression on her. A longing for fresh air came upon her—the room seemed too confined. She went to one of the windows, undid the shutter, unfastened one side of the window and flung it open. The cold air was delightful, and she thrust her hot head out as far as she could stretch. It was a dark cloudy night, without a single star to act as a beacon of hope; but the wild restlessness that possessed her was calmed by the sight of that wide landscape to which there seemed to be no limit in the enshrouding darkness. It was a comfort to look, and look, and feel no tiresome, blocking barrier like the delicately painted walls of her room. God seemed to be nearer to her and man further off; and yet man was very near. As her eyes went from the starless cloud-covered vault above, to the garden below, she saw a very mundane star—the lighted end of a cigar—which seemed to have come to a standstill under her window. Somebody was watching her—what detestable impertinence! Could she not be alone even in the privacy of her own room? As she drew back indignantly the cigar was thrown on the gravel, and the man who had been smoking it, stepped forward, and looking first to right and left, lifted up his face, so that she could indistinctly see a chin and the end of a fair moustache. And then came a cautious whisper; “Can I do anything for you, Bee?”

It was Hugh—faithful old Hugh! He had been anxious about her—he had not forgotten her, though no one else seemed to care. Her heart softened tenderly to her old friend, her chest heaved. A sudden sob came in her throat. But she would not be pitied even by him. She leant out once again. “Lady Malvern said I had a cold. I am trying to make it true. Good night,” she called out hurriedly.

Then she closed the window, and the shutter, and disappeared from sight.

Tears had come at last—a perfect avalanche of long pent-up feelings set loose by the touch of sympathy. She was not given to crying, as so many women are on the slightest excuse, but having begun, she seemed now as if she meant to drown the world.

There were voices on the terrace, but she heard nothing of them,

and when the vehemence of the out-flow had ceased, exhausted by having passed through such a phase of intense emotion in the space of a few hours, she fell asleep, and found some peace at last in unconsciousness.

CHAPTER XVIII.

FALCONER IS UNCOMFORTABLE.

WHEN Lady Falconer shut the window and put an abrupt ending to any conversational intentions, Captain Pemberton was seriously alarmed. The action was so unlike her, for Beatrice was always rather loquacious, and he had known her hang her head out of a railway-carriage till the last moment, in her eagerness to carry on a chat, whilst he ran the whole length of a platform to catch what she said. As she did not want to talk, she had something to hide—and what that something was, he was very keen to find out. He stopped still to light a fresh cigar, and as he did so, his figure and even his profile were plainly visible to the amused eyes of Townshend-Rivers.

“Oh, oh,” thought he, “my Lady has her consolations like other people.”

* * * *

Falconer having failed in getting anyone to play either cards or billiards with him, was going off to bed, when a wisp of paper twisted into an abnormal form and directed to himself attracted his attention as it lay by the side of the last remaining silver candlestick. He recognised his aunt's pointed handwriting, and, prepared for a concentrated pill of abuse, opened it slowly. It was short but to the point and as he read it, his face flushed hotly.

“Please remember that your room is in the East corridor, No. 73. Your man has moved your things for you, by my orders.

HORATIA DOROTHEA MALVERN.”

A curse broke from him—one of the ready oaths in which he so often indulged—and then he stood quite still digesting the pill. How was he to take it? He had the right to do exactly as he chose without being dictated to by an interfering old woman, but the arrangement was convenient for him from one side of the question—decidedly convenient—for it staved off the meeting with

his wife till the next day, and allowed him time to make up his mind as to his future line of conduct. But whether it suited him or not, he held that his aunt had not the smallest right to interfere, and pushing open the door of the billiard-room, he sat down in an arm-chair to think over his grievances. The room looked intensely desolate by the light of his single candle. All the lamps had been put out by a sleepy footman, who was thankful to be able to take it for granted that the gentlemen were not going to play that night. He had covered up the table, replaced the cues in their proper stand, and extinguished the lamps; but having been called away before he completed his operations, the silver stand, with whiskey and brandy in its decanters, was left upon a side-table. Falconer stretched out his arm and poured himself out some brandy. As he raised the glass to his lips his eye fell upon a pocket-book lying open on the floor. There were one or two letters half-hidden under the case which had evidently opened as it dropped from its owner's hand or pocket, and amongst these letters there was a photograph. The case was now deplorably shabby, but it had once been quite a dandy one, and as a relic of its past splendour there was still a silver monogram on it, the prevailing letter of which was a capital P. Falconer picked it up, and gathered its contents together with the intention of replacing them inside the cover. His hand was not as steady as it might be, and the photograph slipped between his fingers down on to the carpet. He stooped and picked it up again, holding it close to the candle, in a sudden access of curiosity. He did not notice the monogram, and he had a vague idea that the pocket-book belonged to the Major, and that the carte-de-visite was probably the fair Millie's. His expression changed however as he stared at the girl's beautiful face—a face radiant with youth, and hope and happiness. Underneath was the signature in the bold hand that he knew so well, "Your old friend, 'Bee.'" "Bee" the very name he called her by himself when he was in the best of tempers, or wanted to get over her in any way! And this photograph was the property of another man—not Mortimer—but *Pemberton*. He knew whose it was in a moment, before the address on those letters told him that he was right.

"CAPTAIN HUGH PEMBERTON,

King's Dragoon Guards, Aldershot."

There it was—curse him! His own wife's—and this other fellow

carried it with him to India and back—down to Aldershot and up to Warwickshire, wherever he went. He clenched his teeth in wild unreasoning rage. He knew as well as anyone else that girls give their photographs right and left to anyone who chooses to ask for them. This one had been taken when Beatrice could not have been more than sixteen. She was dressed in serge with Eton jacket and plain skirt, her sailor hat was lying on the table, and she had a racket in her hand as if she had just come in from a game of tennis. Falconer remembered that Pemberton had given Beatrice a racket for a wedding present, and that she made a point of using it whenever she played. This was another grievance. She looked a happy light-hearted girl, without a care in the world, and Pemberton would think of the days when he knew her best, when she was always bright and cheerful as girls are who have nothing to worry them, and contrast the Beatrice of two years ago with the married woman of to-day. Well, she was his wife, not Pemberton's—he had beaten him there—and Beatrice had given him her whole heart when she married him, so it was no use for the other fellow to go on hankering. In fact it was cursed impudence to carry this likeness in his pocket as if the original belonged to him. By —— he should never do it again, and with a grim smile he held the photograph to the flame of the candle until it was entirely consumed. It was only a bit of card-board, but he felt as if he were committing a murder, as the pretty face, the girlish figure, the small hand holding the racket, shrivelled up and disappeared. In his anxiety to destroy it entirely, he held on to it till the flame actually scorched the tip of his thumb, and then, letting go, he dropped the fragments, which singed the carpet and made a horrible smell of burning.

Just at that moment, Morris, who was popularly supposed never to go to bed, put his grave face in at the half-open door. "Beg pardon, my Lord, but is anything on fire?" looking suspiciously at him.

"Nothing, Morris—I'm just off to bed," and rising with a yawn, he took up his candle and walked past the butler into the passage, without condescending to make any explanation.

"Up to no good, I'll bet five pounds," Morris said to himself, as he explored the empty room. There was no love lost between him and his Mistress's nephew, and if he could have found anything to his discredit, it would have been sure to reach Lady Malvern's ears with her morning coffee.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE CHESTNUT BOLTS.

EXPECTATION was on the *qui vive* the next day, but nothing transpired. Lord Falconer and several of the men, failing any other sort of sport, were engrossed in a rat hunt in the stables. Lady Crosby, determined not to be left out, looked down at them from a window, and made absurd bets with the Major as to the rival exploits of different ferrets.

Beatrice heard wild bursts of laughter coming from the back regions, as she came down to luncheon; and presently the whole party emerged through a swing door, and turned their steps towards her with anxious enquiries after her health. Without looking at him, she saw her husband amongst them, and a slight colour spread over her white cheeks, but she took no notice of him. He was relieved to see that instead of playing the part of an ill-used wife, she looked particularly brilliant, with sparkling eyes, and smiling lips.

"I hope your long rest did you good," Hugh Pemberton slipped in amongst the other inquiries, whilst Falconer stood on one side, feeling uncomfortable, and afraid of saying anything.

"None at all," with a little laugh, "I was literally bored to death."

"If you had only sent me a message, I would have serenaded you from the terrace," Townshend-Rivers affirmed, though he played on no instrument at all—not even the banjo.

"Why didn't you? I should have loved it." Then she threw a cheerful glance over Lady Crosby's head to Pemberton, "I want to do something wild this afternoon. Will you help me?"

"Won't I? What shall it be?"

"Imagine something whilst we have our lunch."

"I'll think it over whilst I wash my hands," and he darted up the stairs as the gong began to sound. The rest of the rat hunting party followed, and with them departed Lady Falconer's fictitious gaiety.

It was a weary face that Morris encountered when he came to tell Beatrice that her Ladyship was in the dining-room; but it changed again as quickly as a kaleidoscope, and Lady Malvern, watching her with kindly eyes, as she sat near her at the long table, was delighted to see how bravely she was carrying herself, and she had known

many mean moments in the course of her long life, of which nobody guessed anything except Morris—Morris, who like a faithful dog asked no questions, but gave devoted service whenever it was needed.

Outside he looked like an automaton with a machine-made face-pattern of "the highly respectable and self-respecting butler type;" but his mistress knew that nothing escaped his eye, and that he had an intuitive perception of the right thing to be done at any moment.

With a countenance as impassive as a sea-mew's, he stood behind Lady Malvern's chair, and whilst seemingly intent on directing the movements of the numerous footmen, he saw that Lady Falconer was playing a part and doing it exceedingly well, that she was surprising the other guests by her wit and vivacity, and charming first one and then another by the sweetness of her smiles, not one of which was spared to her husband. There he sat, sullen and unamused in the midst of the laughter and fun, discussing the merits of a newly invented gun with as much interest as if he had been the original patentee, but all the while watching his wife with the intentness of a paid spy.

He would have understood her so much better if she had crawled downstairs like a half crushed worm, and preserved a blighted appearance for the rest of the day. Then he would have followed her into some quiet corner, given her a kiss, and told her to cheer up; and they might have jogged on together as if nothing had happened. But now she was riding the high horse, and she would make it kick out if he went too near its heels. He felt ridiculously afraid of her; and, when the whole party moved into the hall, he actually lacked the courage to go up and ask her before them all what plans she had made for the afternoon. After eager consultations Lady Malvern was called in for advice and permission, and as she gave them both amiably, all difficulties were cleared away. It was settled that Captain Pemberton and Major Mortimer should have a tandem race on the high road. The course was to be two miles long—the start from the large iron gates of the park—the finish on a line with a decayed windmill no longer at work, which stood close to the hedge at a corner where four roads met, and the pace never to exceed a fast trot. Pemberton was to be accompanied by Lady Falconer, the Major by Millie Crosby. There was an immediate adjournment to the stables, where two carts were found of precisely the same build—the only difference being that the one was

shabbier than the other. The choice of horses took much longer, but as daylight would wait for nobody, they had to be as quick over it as possible.

"Aunt, do you think I ought to allow this?" Falconer asked, as he followed Lady Malvern to the foot of the broad staircase. His anger was rising rapidly, and if she had only encouraged him, he would have flown into a violent rage.

She stopped and looked up at him, with one small foot poised on the first step, her thin, much beringed hand clinging to the bannister. "There is no shame in you," she said coolly. "Have you forgotten yesterday? Allow her to stand on her head if she wants to—you can't say anything."

"But how long is this to go on?" he asked angrily. "It's amusing work stepping out of my own place in order that a confounded idiot may take it."

"Pshaw! What nonsense!" contemptuously. "Be thankful that she has chosen the safest man in the house for her fling. Geoffrey Talbot comes to-night, and he—— But I can't wait or the race will be over before I get there. You can drive me in the phaeton if you like," and she hurried up the stairs at an unusual pace, for her sporting instincts were still as keen as when she lost or won her thousands over every Derby that was run.

Townshend-Rivers rode down the road, and took up his post at the corner by the windmill. Lady Malvern's phaeton was drawn up at the end of a lane to the right; whilst a crowd of idlers belonging to the estate had gathered on the left, and more were continually running up as the news spread that some bit of fun was coming off amongst the company at the Hall. Townshend-Rivers was brimming over with cynical remarks about the chances of the race, but the point had to be taken off them because of Falconer's presence.

Of course such an opportunity for making or losing money could not be wasted, and many bets were made on the issue of the race, most of the men backing Mortimer, because they had doubts as to Pemberton's leader.

"If there's a spill I shall never forgive myself," Lady Malvern remarked when she was tired of waiting. She was rarely nervous—having often declared that nerves are the outcome of affectation; but to-day it occurred to her that it would be just like a three-volume

novel if Beatrice were to be killed before the eyes of her husband, and she began to think it was probable.

"They will only have their own folly to thank for it," rejoined Falconer who had never been anxious about anybody but himself.

"Possibly, but that would be small consolation for either of us," she said drily; and then she began to fidget about the rest of the guests who came up in anything they could lay hold of, and took a long time in getting into positions where they could see, and yet be out of the competitors' way.

Lady Malvern called to Mr. Townshend-Rivers, in a shrill voice to clear the course, as a waggon came in view. After a little talk, he persuaded the waggoner to draw up under the hedge without coming any further. This he was really quite willing to do, as his time belonged to his master, and his sporting instincts to himself. At the last moment, Mrs. Jocelyn arrived in a great flurry, seated in a farm cart driven by her devoted admirer, General Mannering, who now that he had retired from the army, had time to make advances amongst the fair sex.

"Just like Agneta," snapped Lady Malvern. "An hour for her looking-glass, but five minutes to get to her place. She never cares how long she keeps other people waiting. Are they never coming?"

As a groom was standing by the horses' heads, Falconer dropped the reins, got down, and walked into the middle of the road. He put his hand up to his forehead to shield his eyes from a slanting ray of the departing sun. As he stood there he was a very striking figure, with his tall muscular frame, jet-black hair, and stern white face. Many eyes were fixed on him, and many criticisms made.

"He looks in no end of a wax," an underkeeper suggested to a friend in a shabby suit of velvet. "I shouldn't like to feel the weight of his darned thumb."

"'E looks as ready to do a mischief as a fox popping 'is 'ead into a farmyard," rejoined the other.

"He's worse nor any fox," muttered the keeper savagely, who had an old score to settle with him.

"They are coming," Falconer raised his voice as he announced the fact to the Marchioness.

A thrill of excitement ran through the bystanders, and every head was craned forward, Townshend-Rivers sat as still as a rock. The waggoner gave a careful look at his team. Falconer stood well in

front. The tandems came in sight, moving along steadily, but at a rapid pace. Pemberton's cart was on the off side, and the chestnut was already ahead of the rival bay. Women fluttered their handkerchiefs, men shouted and waved their hats, Lady Malvern stood up and fixed her keen old eyes on Beatrice's face. She was smiling, and looking very bright, as the wind ruffled the feathers in her hat, and cries of "The chestnut! The chestnut wins!" rose from both sides of the road.

Just as they were close upon him, Falconer pulled out a large white silk pocket handkerchief. As he shook it out of its folds, preparatory to blowing his nose, the wind caught it from his hand, and flung it straight into the chestnut's face. The startled horse swerved right across the road and cannoned Mortimer's leader plump into the hedge. Unable to stop himself, the wheeler fell, throwing the Major and Millie out of the cart, and hurting both knees badly. Lady Crosby's flying form was caught in the arms of a sturdy farmer, whilst Mortimer reposed in the prickly embrace of a furze bush. Men rushed forward to help, women screamed aloud, the bay plunged wildly, whilst the gallant chestnut righted himself cleverly, and bolted down the road, the dog-cart swinging to right and left, but with Captain Pemberton and Lady Falconer still inside it. Lady Malvern hopped out of the phaeton with Townshend-Rivers' help.

"'They will have fleet steeds that follow,' quoth the young Lochinvar,'" he quoted airily.

She withered him with a glance, and going up to her nephew, she said with severity, "I hope you are satisfied."

"My wife is having her fling," with a shrug of his shoulders.

"You've killed her—for she's certain to be dashed to pieces. You've frightened Millie Crosby out of the small amount of sense she ever had—you've ruined the grey, and taken a hundred at least off his value. And now go, and don't come near me again for years—I can't stand you."

She stood before him, a little fragile old woman, but no more afraid of him than if he were a babe of a year old, with all the hatred and scorn which had grown up within her during these last years, breaking forth in the glance of her eye and the tone of her voice; and he looked down upon her from his height, and the big, powerful man felt absolutely cowed.

"Triumph of mind over matter," ejaculated Townshend-Rivers, watching the scene from the background, where he was busily engaged keeping his own horse, and several others out of mischief.

Lord Falconer stooped, picked up his handkerchief, and walked away.

Millie Crosby was sitting on a pile of rugs surrounded by a sympathetic crowd. She was in a nervous flurry, and the small hands which were trying to bend her crushed hat into something like its original form, shook violently. The farmer who had caught her in his muscular arms, looked down upon her yellow head with sheepish admiration, and flourished her sealskin muff with a proudly appropriative air, but the Major, after ascertaining that she had sustained no serious damage, was woefully inspecting the grey's off knee, an inspection at which the Marchioness assisted with great interest. The head groom hazarded the remark that the injury was not so very serious, and that with proper care the marks would wear off. Lady Malvern offered him her own embroidered scrap of a handkerchief, by way of a bandage, but he rejected it with scant civility, saying that "it was no mortal use to go a-tying of em up."

"Cares much more about that four-legged brute than she does about me," Millie said to herself with a pout; and then she raised her voice and explained that she had been "shaken," and now she wished to know how she was to be "taken."

The Marchioness, still with one eye following the grey who was being led home with the utmost care, offered her a seat in the phaeton, and Major Mortimer threw over his shoulder a reproachful "Won't you trust yourself to me? The bay's perfectly steady."

"Never again, thank you," she said with a shudder, and she looked as if she meant it.

CHAPTER XX.

IN THE DUSK.

"THE child will be killed, I know she will," Lady Malvern kept repeating at frequent intervals as the afternoon wore on into evening.

Some of the men rode after the run-away tandem, but returned sooner or later bringing small items of news which did not carry

much assurance of safety to the Marchioness's mind. Townshend-Rivers suggested that it was far easier to run away than to come back, and that all run-away couples, if examined on oath, would certainly agree with him.

"It is not a question of a run-away couple," Lady Malvern said testily.

"Two people must make a couple, and as they are not here—they must be away, and as they went very fast it is equivalent to running," he rejoined imperturbably as he balanced himself on a stool which was much too small for him, and thereby jeopardised one of his hostess's precious Dresden tea-cups.

"Do put down that cup, and talk sense if you can," she said crossly, for there is nothing so aggravating as a series of small jokes when you are in a state of feverish anxiety.

"It's a large order," he said coolly, "but I will try to comply with it. Am I to understand that we are to have your charming niece all to ourselves without her Colossus of a husband? It doesn't seem like his form; I can fancy his going off, but with his wife packed tight under his arm."

"I never thought of that. Ring the bell, please." When Morris appeared she asked him if Lord Falconer had gone.

"No, my Lady," and then he lowered his voice, and told her that he believed his Lordship was waiting for her Ladyship; in fact he had heard that Miss Warren—her Ladyship's maid—had been told to pack up everything, and be ready to start directly she arrived.

"I must see to this at once," she said, looking quite tragic.

She sent Falconer a message to come to her directly, and then hobbled out of the room to receive him in private. Directly the door closed upon her ancient figure, there was a general loosening of tongues.

Mrs. Jocelyn opined that if she had been unfortunate enough to have an ill-tempered monster of a husband like Lord Falconer, she would have owed a debt of gratitude to the chestnut.

"Ah, but then—the coming back," Millie said with a shake of her head, as she imagined Sir Digby under the circumstances.

"Are you sure there will be a coming back?" asked Townshend-Rivers, whose cue it was to seem to believe in nobody but himself.

"As sure as that I stand here," Major Mortimer said decisively. "That girl has the making of a martyr."

"Fortunate—as her husband will always be ready to offer her the opportunity."

"You are entirely mistaken about her," Millie said, with an access of temper. "She's a dear delightful creature, but no more of a martyr than I am."

"I don't hear anything. It's really getting serious," looking at his watch.

"I can't sit here doing nothing," Lady Crosby exclaimed, jumping up, and upsetting a fox-terrier which she had been fondling.

"Go out and look for them if you like, but don't ask me to come with you," Mrs. Jocelyn said languidly, as she looked up from the game of Halma in which she had embarked with her General.

Millie turned from her in disgust. "What can I do?" she said appealingly to the Major, "I feel as if I must scream."

"That wouldn't do much good," he said with a smile, as he saw that her blue eyes were actually full of tears. "If you like, I will go out again."

"Oh do—do!" excitedly, "go out, and don't come back till you find them."

"Don't stir, Major Mortimer, unless you happen to be going to dress for dinner."

Looking round hastily, he saw the Marchioness standing behind him with victory depicted in every line of her face.

"But I am in an agony about Beatrice," Millie cried with clasped hands.

"Then you needn't be," with the utmost tranquillity. "She is perfectly well, though rather tired, so I've given her some tea, and told her to lie down."

"Then they've come back!" and all looked round with re-awakened interest.

"Of course they have," as if she herself had never had a moment's uneasiness about them. "They lost their way, which was no wonder, as neither of them knew it."

"And they didn't have a spill? Now I call that a regular shame," and the Major looked disgusted.

"I call it little short of a miracle, but it seems that young Pemberton is a capital whip; and the way he handled those horses in the midst of the smash, I shall never forget."

"No more shall I," said the Major somewhat drily.

"No more shall I," echoed Millie emphatically.

"And what does Falconer say?" Townshend-Rivers asked with twinkling eyes.

A quiver as if a smile were hovering in the distance passed over Lady Malvern's lips, but she answered with decision. "Nothing—absolutely nothing—the best thing any man could say under the circumstances."

"At least the best thing Falconer could say—we all agree to that. I should have improved the occasion," lifting up his chin.

General Mannering looked up from Halma "And made a serious business of a mere trifle."

"Just like a man," quoth the Countess, whose experience of the male sex was wide and varied.

"Whilst woman, frivolous woman, makes a trifle of a serious business, lucky we are here to counterbalance her."

Millie was too much interested in the subject on hand to worry herself about abstract questions. Her anxiety was relieved, but curiosity remained, and she was dying to know every detail.

Lady Malvern moved about the room, collecting her various properties, "the Field,"—the last volume of a sporting novel—and her tortoise-shell-handled lorgnette. Her interview with Falconer had passed off triumphantly. He would on no account let his wife stay at Ethelred Hall without him; but he had agreed to stay till the next day, and then go to the Grange, on condition that she started at the same time to join her father at St. Christopher's. This was an arrangement which suited Beatrice exactly. She would be free of her husband for a fortnight at least, and time would possibly soften her feelings towards him. In the healthy atmosphere of her home her mind would recover its tone, and she would gain fresh courage to enable her to face the future. At all events it was a respite, and she was intensely grateful to Lady Malvern.

Whilst everyone was discussing Beatrice so glibly downstairs, she lay on the sofa in a cream-coloured tea-gown lazily sipping her tea, as she watched the burning logs in the grate.

After the first panic, when the chestnut dashed so wildly along the road dragging with it the unwilling roan—when any obstacle such as a cart or a carriage in the way would have made a collision inevitable, and death an unpleasant probability—she had enjoyed her drive most thoroughly.

When all danger was over, and Hugh had the chestnut well in hand, they turned out of the direct high-road where boys were often hooting or cheering them, and passers-by stopped still to watch them, as if they were driving for a prize at a horse-show—into a by-lane, intending to return to Ethelred Hall by another route.

The navigation of the lanes became a puzzling exercise, especially as the dusk fell promptly upon them, and shrouded them round in a soft grey mist, but as Beatrice remarked, "there was no hurry." To the poor heart-sick wife it was such rest to be out there in the deepening twilight with no part to play, no appearances to keep up. She could be her own natural self with Hugh under the overshadowing branches of the trees in those high-banked lanes, and the relief was immense. He talked to her as no one else did, without one word of flirtation, but as he talked the bonds of their friendship seemed to be drawn ever closer and closer, and a great well of comfort sprang up in her chilled heart. Oh! if she could stay out there in the friendly darkness, and never go back to civilization and all its necessary concomitants again! Presently a sign-post started up aggressively at a corner with "To Wroxall," printed on it in such distinct letters that their young eyes could decipher it even in that dim light.

"Let us lose ourselves!" she cried on the impulse of the moment, as a great dread seized her at the thought of going back.

Hugh said nothing, but his face flushed, and his heart gave a leap as he deliberately turned the chestnut's head in the contrary direction. Wroxall was the nearest village to Ethelred Hall, and they were leaving it now on their right and going on indefinitely into the darkness, with the wooded hills gathering round, and the silence of the evening closing them in with its mystery.

It was a time that Hugh Pemberton never forgot. He had always been fond of Bee Kennard whom he knew far better than any other girl in the world. He had lived with his uncle in Eaton Square, only a few doors off from the Kennards, that is to say when he was not at Eton or Sandhurst. Having no sisters of his own, he made her into one instead, and even when he carried her photograph about in his pocket, he used to regard it with a sober fraternal affection. He heard of her approaching marriage with a vague sense of disapproval, but when the marriage was consummated he did not regard it as a personal grievance. He even told himself that if she

had married a decent sort of fellow he could have made a friend of him, and sympathised heartily in her happiness. But when he found that instead of being happy she was miserable, his feelings underwent a complete change. Indifference vanished—his heart felt in a tumult of unrest. Her silent endurance appealed to him more forcibly than any amount of sobs. She would not confide in him, and he liked her all the better for it; but to know that she was suffering and that he could do nothing to help her was simply maddening. Bee, his old play-fellow, ill-treated by a great hulking brute, and he must stand by and look on! Impossible on the face of it!

"My poor little Bee!" The words burst from him involuntarily, but she checked him at once.

"Don't—don't—you mustn't pity me"—she cried wildly, with a little gasp as if she were choking.

His heart beat furiously, as he bit his moustache, and crushed back the words of tenderness and compassion which were almost forcing themselves on to his tongue.

It was a dangerous moment, for they seemed to be alone in the world with no one to listen or disturb. The wind rustled amongst the autumn leaves—a sheep-bell tinkled in one of the dewy fields—a dog barked and rattled his chain in a farm-yard on the other side of the hedge. The horses were going as quietly as two tame lambs; he could even pull up, and make them stand still under the shadows in the silent lane, and then if he bent over her, and said "Tell me" surely all barriers of wifely reticence would break down, and she would pour out her troubles into his willing ear. The temptation was insidious, but he over-mastered it. He held himself in hand as he had held the chestnut, and when at last they drew up before the portico of Ethelred Hall, not one word had been spoken between them that her husband might not have overheard—and yet—

Her face was very white as the lamp-light fell upon it in the hall, and she hurried to the stairs as if her great object were to get away to the privacy of her own rooms without meeting anyone. But she stopped at the foot, and looked over her shoulder, struck by a sudden thought. Hugh went up to her. She looked into his face with an earnest gaze that he found bewildering. "You won't quarrel with him, promise me that," she said in a low voice.

"What if I can't help it?"

"But you *must*," with great emphasis. "Don't you see what would happen?" speaking fast in her eagerness. "I should lose you entirely."

"Would that matter much? You have scores of friends."

Beatrice felt as if she would like to shake him.

"Scores of acquaintances—half-a-dozen friends—and one pal," she summed up briefly. "Perhaps I've bored him, and he wants to go;" again she looked up at him and scanned his face critically.

"No, keep me on—when you bore me I'll give you notice," he said with an effort, and a meagre pretence at a smile.

A door opened—and she fled like a frightened rabbit, whilst he stood quite still, conscious that his pulses were bounding insanely; and as he stood there, he was captured by his hostess, and questioned like an unfortunate witness by a merciless Q.C.

"Never neglect details," she said afterwards when in a confidential mood, to Millie Crosby, who was satisfying her curiosity by inches. "I sent tea up to both their rooms, and announced it publicly, lest Falconer might imagine that they had been having a sentimental tête-a-tête in an inn-parlour."

"But didn't they?" in surprise. "I'm sure I should have had a cup of tea and a cosy talk."

"No, they are such superior people that they preferred muddy lanes and dripping branches. Everyone to his taste, as I said when I heard that the child was going to marry Falconer," and the old lady turned into her own room—thinking of the days when she always made the best use of her opportunities, and left consequences to take care of themselves.

(To be continued.)

"Prince Woronky's Love Story."

By V.

CHAPTER I.

HARD BESET.

ON a certain night in Petersburg, not so very long ago, an Ice Carnival was held in one of the gardens of the great houses. It was the entertainment of the season, and all Russian society was there. An Ice-palace had been erected at one end of the lake for the supper-rooms, and the scene was the most brilliant imaginable, the whole space for skating was lighted with electric light, and the skaters were in gorgeous Russian costumes of every description, to which the black masks they wore added a bizarre effect against the white background of snow. The night was clear and bitterly cold, the whirring of the skates, the tinkling of the sleigh-bells filled the air, the sky was studded with innumerable stars which shone with unchanging solemnity and mystery on this little spot of earth, a focus of human passion, with its comedies, its tragedies, its anticipations, its regrets.

At first sight, the mass of ever-moving figures seemed a mere kaleidoscope of brilliant colour without individuality, but presently two figures detached themselves from the crowd, and skated swiftly towards the darker end of the lake. The man was over six feet, a splendid figure, in the uniform of a Cossack regiment, and the woman was also tall and slender, dressed remarkably, in white velvet and ermine, her hussar jacket heavily braided in gold and lined with scarlet, while the great spray of rubies and opals in her cap flashed strangely in the passing lights. They were soon followed by another figure, who skated slowly after them; he was a man of middle height, strongly built, broad and deep-chested; though plainly dressed, with nothing but his own bearing to denote rank or influence, his personality conveyed a curious impression of power. These three silent masked figures, the One overshadowing the Two with an unknown presence, speeding silently over the ice into the dark night beyond, were weird and almost tragical in their effect.

The couple stopped when they reached the edge of the lake, and

he who followed them immediately withdrew behind a small clump of firs, as if desirous of seeing without being seen.

"What is it you have to say to me, Casimir Alexandrovitch?" said the woman, in a rich low voice that was almost a caress.

She removed her mask as she spoke, and the starlight fell on an extraordinarily noble and beautiful face. Her companion followed her example and unmasked; he also was handsome, but to a close observer an evil life had marred the beauty of outline; the mark of the fallen angel was there.

"What is it I want to say to you Darya Nicolevna?" he returned passionately, "this is our last meeting for a year; ah! if you loved me as you profess, you could not have consented to so cruel a separation!"

For a moment the girl did not answer: hers was a nature to suffer silently, and she spoke gently, even coldly, "My guardian has promised his consent to our marriage if I am in the same mind then, and you know very well I shall not change."

"But you do not care," said the man bitterly, "I think you are cold as the ice itself, Darya Nicolevna."

"Cold!" repeated the girl, with a sudden fierce recklessness breaking through her reserve, ah! how little you understand me, when my heart is breaking—breaking." Her voice died away in a low sobbing breath as he caught her in his arms and kissed her passionately.

It was but a repetition of the same old story, for the man she was only one beautiful woman among many, to be persistently wooed and easily tired of; for her, he was her first lover, adored and idealised with all the fervour and imagination of the strong early developed Russian nature.

But Count Casimir Petroff was playing a desperate game to-night, there was something besides love in his eyes; ruin was staring him in the face, and this girl and her wealth stood between him and the final disgrace of a gambler who cannot pay his debts of honour. To his strained senses came the sound of the sleigh-bells across the snow, he could hear the voices of his servants calling to the horses, they were waiting for them both, surely it would not be hard to persuade a woman who loved! With consent, or without, she must go with him to-night, but all women were fools, and this was the most charming fool of them all. He bent closer to the beautiful head.

"Darya my own, my beloved," he whispered rapidly, "if you love me, why should we part? My sleigh is waiting for us both; once together nothing can part us."

"What is it you want me to do?" murmured the girl startled and trembling, drawing herself away from him.

"Only this," said Petroff in the same tone of passionate entreaty, with the fervour of a man pleading for his life, "Come with me to-night, I have arranged everything, why should you return to the old lonely life? Come with me Darya, my beloved one, and the most perfect happiness awaits us both." He caught her hands again in his as he spoke, and pressed them to his lips.

Darya understood now very well what he meant, and a fierce struggle was taking place within her; on the one side, was the exquisite happiness of union with the man she loved, marred by the dishonour of a stolen marriage, and a broken promise; on the other, separation from her lover and a return to a soul-stifling life with an aunt she detested. The powers of good and evil were warring together in her heart as she stood with her hands in her lover's, looking with unseeing eyes across the star-lit waste of snow; what wonder was it that her great love for this man, her longing for happiness, almost weighed down the balance? The wind sighed softly in the pines, and suddenly across the ice came the sound of music; the band was playing one of those wild Russian dances in which tears are veiled in laughter, and gaiety is so strangely linked with sorrow. It was her mother's favourite air, Darya was playing it to her when she died, and who shall say the spirit of the dead woman was not guarding her child in that supreme choice between good and evil, for to the girl's excited imagination it seemed as if her mother was calling to her through the familiar music, warning her against an unrealised danger, pointing out the path she should follow. Darya raised her eyes, full of tears, to the Count's face—he thought he had triumphed.

"Come!" he whispered exultantly, trying to draw her away, "come my beautiful one, the horses are impatient and we must go!" But Darya did not move.

"I cannot go with you, Casimir Alexandrovitch," she said in a tone of deep sadness; it seemed to me then as if my dead mother forbade it. You have indeed proved your love to me to-night, but I love you too well to bring shame on your name by a secret marriage. I promised my guardian not to see you for a year, if he would then

consent to our union. Ah, my beloved! the parting will only strengthen our love for one another."

For a moment Petroff's eyes fell before the innocent confiding gaze of the woman he so treacherously meant to betray, he knew that this was not the coy resolution of a girl whose scruples might be overcome by persuasion, and the blow was the more unexpected because his influence with women had usually proved irresistible, but ruin stared him anew in the face, and his rage and disappointment completely overcame him. His grasp on Darya's wrist tightened like a vice.

"We shall not part so easily, Mademoiselle Basistoff," he said in a low furious voice, "you profess to love me. What! do you think I am to be made a fool of by the whims of a girl? You should have thought of this before you trusted yourself with me, you are in my power: who will hear you?"

With a violent effort Darya wrenched herself free from him. "I think you are mad," she said, turning very white, "you forget yourself strangely, Casimir Alexandrovitch," and she turned, and skated swiftly away. But with a few strong strokes he was by her side. "Ah, you think to escape me!" he said, putting his arm round her waist and holding her firmly, "no woman has baffled me yet, and you shall not be the first, my pretty one; come with me quietly, or by heaven! I shall make you."

Darya stood still and faced him, but there was no room for fear in the tumult of emotions which filled her heart at that moment; it was as if an earthquake had overthrown every familiar landmark, and stranded her on an unfamiliar shore. Could this indeed be her lover, the man against whom she must protect herself? Then her eyes flashed dangerously. "Let me go," she said hoarsely.

"Let you go!" he repeated with a laugh, "ask me anything else, ah!"

His hold on her suddenly gave way, as a heavy hand was laid on his shoulder, and a masked figure stood by Darya's side.

"So, my friend, you have been a little too hasty in the conclusion of your romance," he said, in a satirical voice, "surely, with his knowledge of women, Count Petroff should know they will not be hurried; naturally Mademoiselle Basistoff would take time to consider your proposition."

The Count swore sullenly under his breath; but he knew his adversary.

"Ah! do not swear in the presence of a lady," said the other composedly, "it is unfortunate certainly that Mademoiselle Basistoff's fortune is not available to pay your gambling debts, and I think in arranging that wedding in the chapel yonder, you forgot the existence of your wife in Poland. I received proofs of her identity this morning."

"It is not true, it is not true!" said Darya desperately, standing between them, and looking from one to the other, "Casimir Alexandrovitch, say it is not true!"

But there are some questions which require no answer, and as Darya realised the infamy of her lover, she uttered a low cry of horror, and staggering backwards would have fallen, had not the man who had saved her caught her in his arms, and laid her gently down in merciful unconsciousness on the ice. Then he rose to his feet, and removing his mask, faced Petroff with a terrible and just anger on his rugged powerful face. "Go, scoundrel," he said sternly, and the man's iron control over his own passion was more terrible than an outburst of rage, "and beware how you tamper again with what belongs to me." He advanced a step as he spoke, and suddenly made a sign with his hand; the effect was instantaneous; the Count's sullen handsome face grew white to the lips, his jaw dropped, the man was trembling with fear. The other snapped his fingers contemptuously.

"Now you know what I know," he said, "and men have gone to the mines for less. Go! lest I change my mind, Siberia is a safe place for such as you." Petroff needed no second bidding, he turned and went, his shoulders bent, his face ghastly with the fear which possessed him. The other man waited till he was out of sight, then whistled softly three times, and almost as the sound left his lips, a sleigh emerged from the pine-trees which bordered the lake, and advanced towards them. As it approached, a woman's voice said rapidly in French, "Is she safe, Monsieur le Prince, and what have you done with Monsieur le Diable?"

"He is finished with for the present," was the grim answer, "the old story was to have been repeated, a false priest, a mock marriage, *et enfin*—" he shrugged his shoulders expressively, "but she was true to her promise to me as I expected; I will bring her to you."

He lifted Darya's unconscious figure from the ice with an infinite tenderness, and laid her in the sleigh. The other woman watched him curiously.

"I wonder what you have done with him!" she repeated.

"Do you think I have killed him?" he said with a short laugh.

"He deserved it," she answered with a fierce concentrated hate in her voice, "the only fate for such men is to be wiped off the face of the earth. *Pauvre petite*, I will take her home, and you can make excuses to Mademoiselle Basistoff, Monsieur le Prince."

The sleigh moved away across the ice, and the man skated rapidly after it; he was soon once more in the midst of the gay crowd of pleasure seekers. It was after twelve o'clock, everyone was unmasked, and he was the observed of all observers, for Prince Boris Woronzky was one of the most powerful men in Petersburg, the intimate friend of the Czar, with whom he possessed considerable influence, and suspected in more than one quarter of being the real though not nominal head of the secret police. Hated by some, and feared by all, he was one of those inscrutable men who see everything and reveal nothing. In spite of the numerous people who detained him, he pursued his way with persistence characteristic of the man, and entered the supper-rooms at the opposite end of the lake; after a rapid glance round, he went on to the card-room beyond. At one of the tables sat an old woman, more like a bundle of gorgeous clothes than anything else; her yellow neck was covered with jewels, her shaking hands clutched the cards eagerly, and her thin cruel lips muttered discontentedly as she examined them.

"Ah! Boris Fedorvitch, is it you?" she said as he approached her. "I have had horribly bad luck to-night, I shall be ruined if it goes on. What is it you say? Speak louder, I am deaf."

"Darya Nicolevna has been taken ill, and has gone home with Madame Sherentieff," said Woronzky, putting his mouth to her ear.

"Ah! indeed," said the old woman with a leer of comprehension, "then she can't flirt any more with that handsome rascal, Petroff, eh, Boris Fedorvitch, but do oblige me by going away," she continued irritably, "I cannot play whilst you stand at my elbow."

With a shrug of disgust Woronzky left her, and passed out of the heated room into the cold night beyond. This wreck of an old maid represented Darya Basistoff's home life; it was small wonder, after all, that the girl had so readily "cast her pearls before swine;" to some women the very whiteness of their own souls, the very purity and nobility of their desires and aspirations, seem to prove an occasion of temptation.

CHAPTER II.

A PAGE FROM THE PAST.

"*Ma foi!* what can you expect?" said Madame Sherentieff, with a shrug of her pretty shoulders, "all men are bad more or less, and women must buy their own experience, that's all; harden your heart as I have, my poor child, and then you can make them suffer in their turn," and she laughed a light laugh it was not pleasant to hear.

She and Darya Basistoff were alone in the latter's bedroom; she was a small fair woman beautifully dressed; the men raved about her, and deserted women of far greater beauty for her sake. There was silence in the room after she had spoken, Darya sat on the floor in her red dressing-gown; her arms clasped her knees, her hair was rough on her shoulders, and her great eyes burned like fire in her white face; she had been thus for two days and two nights, neither sleeping, eating, or speaking. She had lost all sense of shame or pride, the hot irons of unmerited humiliation, of misplaced affection, were branding her soul, and she had given up all count of the lesser things of existence. Natalya Sherentieff's pretty face hardened into resolution; this was an extreme case, and needed extreme remedies.

"Darya Nicolevna! only a woman who has been ground in the same mill as yourself can help you," she said, and there was something in the harsh tone of her voice which startled Darya into attention.

"You think of me as a frivolous woman devoted to pleasure," she went on slowly, "but I only use the pleasure as a means to an end. It's true I am heartless; do you want to know who made me so? It was Casimir Petroff!"

There was another silence; it was as if two naked human souls were gazing at each other in passionate question and answer, until the words again dropped fiercely from Natalya Sherentieff's lips.

"It was long ago," she said, "I was a child like you then, I seem to have grown old—old since; he was the first man I met, and was quartered with his regiment near my father's country estates. I ran away with him, but we were married secretly the day before we started. I hadn't been with him a week before I found out that he was married already, and that the man who read the service over us, to silence my foolish scruples, was not even a priest; it's not the first

time, as you see, that a mock marriage has served his end, and I found out too," she continued, in the same slow fierce tones, "the wickedness of the world. I was in the power of a bad man, and I, who had been as ignorant of evil as a baby, from no sin of my own, but only because I loved, went through the tortures of hell in those few days. I escaped at last, and went back to my father; the whole affair was hushed up, and I married within the next year. I did not love my husband, but he knew everything, and I am grateful to him. Be thankful, poor foolish child! that Boris Woronzky has saved you from my fate."

She stopped abruptly, there was a shuddering sigh from Darya; she had fallen on her knees before the Icon above her head. With one pitying glance at the prostrate figure, Natalya Sherentieff went softly out of the room, and shut the door; she understood, from terrible experience, that, in such storm and stress no human help can avail, each soul must battle through the dark waters alone; the weak sink, but the strong reach the shore, albeit it is strewn with wreckage. And Darya wept those bitter tears which harden the heart instead of softening it; thus she mourned her dead love, with its hopes and illusions.

CHAPTER III.

FROZEN ICE.

THREE people sat at dinner in the Woronzky Palace; Prince and Princess Woronzky, and their guest, Count Casimir Petroff.

Only terrible necessity had brought the lives of these people into contact again. A veiled Death waited on the steps of the Imperial Palace, so awful in its reality, that it might well make the stoutest heart quail, and before the horror of it all private animosities, all individual passions were blotted out. The Prince had reason to believe that Petroff was a member of a certain committee of desperate men, whose campaign of Terror, if not checkmated by courage and devotion, would make Europe ring from end to end. With an unerring knowledge of human nature, Woronzky knew well enough that this type of man is as dangerous to friends as to foes; the Count was no patriot, he was rather one of those unprincipled Esaus of society, whose hand is against all that does not serve their own

interests. A heavy bribe was a sure method of modifying his revolutionary opinions! In this city of spies, the only way the two men could meet without exciting suspicion, was that Woronzky should receive the Count as a guest in his house, and in coming there that night Petroff was playing a double game. Ostensibly to his own party he was acting as a spy on the Prince; in reality, as he knew himself, he was as potter's clay in the hands of his quiet courteous host, who read the man's base nature through like a book, and with the power of the higher will over the lower, forced it into subservience to his own purposes. The Count was playing with edged tools, yet there was something after all to admire in the coolness of the man, who found himself, so to speak, between the fire and the deep sea; he was completely in Woronzky's power, who knew sufficient to send him to the mines for life, while, if he did obtain a free pardon and a heavy bribe by betraying the secrets of the Society to which he belonged, it was not improbable that Death would still dog his footsteps; judgment in such cases is usually unerring.

Darya Woronzky was but a development of Darya Basistoff, yet she had changed greatly in these few years of married life. A beautiful girl, she was a still more beautiful woman, and though her face had lost the roundness and freshness of early youth, it had gained in interest and charm; there was that in the wistfulness of the wonderful eyes, in the sadness of the strong tender mouth, which betrayed the knowledge of suffering, knowledge which is power to the man or woman possessing it.

This was the first time she had met Casimir Petroff since the Carnival night. Her manner was that of the finished woman of the world, and even the Count's insatiable vanity and cool effrontery were awed into respect, by that perfect mixture of the indifference of the great lady, with the gracious condescension exercised towards the guest of the house. None could have guessed from her composure, the agony of humiliation she was enduring at the sight of that evil handsome face, which seemed like the ghost of dead influences, of dead sensations; the strong self-controlled woman-nature wondered, with a mixture of pity and repulsion, at the infatuation and suffering of the girl, and yet, it was by these very steps she had risen to the height of her womanhood.

Darya was one of those women who scourge themselves only too willingly for past errors, and her dread of being absent at the meeting

between these two men was greater than her distaste at being present. The Prince had silently acquiesced in her desire to receive Petroff; he understood her motive perfectly, for there was a curious sympathy between the two. If she did not yet love him, Darya was singularly fitted to be the wife of such a man as Woronsky; she had a clear vigorous intellect, a silent tongue, and a high courage; he trusted her absolutely, and his dangerous undertakings made his life one of constant peril; none knew but himself how often he had stood between his Imperial Master and the relentless foes who pursued him inside the very walls of his Palace. The dominating influences of the man's life were devotion to the woman he had married, and loyalty to his sovereign, and where they were concerned he was inexorable.

He controlled his love for his wife with the patience of his strong silent nature. When he persuaded her to marry him, broken, despairing as she was in body and soul, he had said simply that he loved her, and would be content till she loved him.

Darya was passionately grateful to him, and as she sat at the head of his table that evening, in all the assured dignity and safe shelter of wifehood, confronted in the person of Casimir Petroff with possibilities which made her shudder, she knew suddenly, that it was not gratitude, but love which drew her towards her husband.

The conversation was carried on with the easy grace of people accustomed to wear the mask of society; the warm air was delicately scented with hothouse flowers, the servants moved softly about the room, everything was calm, luxurious, giving no hint of the dangerous game these people were playing, or of another peril close at hand.

The great blood-hound Wulf lay by Darya's side, and seemed the only disturbed element in the room; he was his mistress's constant and devoted companion, but to-night he seemed strangely restless, occasionally uttering low troubled growls.

"I know not what ails the dog," said Darya at last, when the dessert was on the table, and the servants had left the room, "I have never seen him so fierce, and see, he will eat nothing!"

"Ingrate! to refuse anything from so fair a hand," cried Petroff gaily, then raising his glass, "let me pledge you Princess, I, at least, will receive everything from your hands with gratitude!"

Darya could not resist a shudder of repulsion; nevertheless, with a strong effort of control, she held out her glass to touch his, but at the same instant there was a low horrible growl from the bloodhound;

with a bound he would have flown at the Count, had not Darya caught him by the collar, and held him back with all her strength, then suddenly, he turned upon her, worrying and tearing her arm with the blind fury of madness.

"Boris, Boris!" but the agonised terror-stricken cry was not needed; almost before it was uttered Woronzky had the dog by the throat, and freed her. Then began an awful struggle between the man and the mad brute; the Prince, though a short man, was possessed of immense strength, his muscle and sinew had been developed by a regular system of training, till they were like iron, they stood him in good stead now. Petroff leant against the wall, overcome with the horror of the thing and the narrowness of his own escape; it has been seen he was not lacking in courage, but the very name of hydrophobia scared him.

"Coward!" hissed Darya between her set teeth, "if you won't help him, go and get help." And Petroff turned and went, stumbling in his haste.

For a moment Darya watched that terrible struggle, all fear for self, all sensation of pain lost in the wild desire to save the man she now realised she loved with the whole strength of her soul. Suddenly she caught sight of the knives lying on the dinner-table.

The room was strewn with the débris of broken china and wrecked furniture, the Prince's strength was beginning to fail, his clothes were torn to ribbons, his breath came in great panting gasps, the man and the brute swayed backwards and forwards in a struggle which could only end one way; there was a red mist before Woronzky's eyes, a singing in his ears, those horrid fangs were close at his throat, the hot vile breath fanned his cheek, when there was the gleam of a knife with a wild white face above it, and in another moment the dog fell, stabbed to the heart, rolling over and over in its death agony, and Darya was clinging to him passionately.

"I have saved you, I have saved you," she repeated in sobbing exultation, "you know now that I love you—you saved me, but I also saved you!"

And Woronzky, as he saw on that beloved face the glory and light of a love equal to his own, knew that the full happiness of life had come to him at last.

He was the first to break the wonderful silence.

"Darya, my own, my beloved," he whispered, in his deep tender voice, "do you know that the dog was mad?"

Darya slowly lifted her head from his breast, and looked at him; then she understood.

"You mean there is danger for us both?" she said quietly.

"There is only one way out of it," he answered, and his voice faltered somewhat, "I must burn your wounds and my own."

He did not wait for her reply, but putting her gently aside went over to the stove, and thrust the poker into the hot embers.

But Darya's nerve, already strained to the utmost, then utterly gave way; in vain she implored him to spare her, even flying from him round the room. Woronzky was inexorable, he cauterised her wounds first, unmoved by her cries and entreaties, then his own.

When the servants, sent by Petroff, rushed into the room, they found the Princess fainting on the floor, and the Prince, grim, blood-stained, exhausted, kneeling beside her.

* * * *

Great natures, like iron, are often cold till heated by fire, but if then united they are indissoluble, and as in the old fairy tales, which contrast so refreshingly with the melancholy conclusions of most modern story-tellers, the Woronzkys lived happily ever after. They spent the summer in retirement on their estates in Livonia, and shortly after their departure a dangerous plot was discovered against the Government, in which several persons of high position were implicated. People had hardly recovered from the shock of this discovery, when Count Casimir Petroff's dead body was found one morning on the banks of the Neva, where it had drifted ashore. A certain mysterious mark cut with a knife on the left hand of the dead man, was a silent witness to those who knew, that Fate, linking hands with Justice, had proved merciless.

Nurse Hyde's Experiences.

By J. BARRETT-KNOX.

THERE was unusual excitement in the wards of Zoughton Infirmary as Christmas Day drew near, for a rumour had gained ground that a play was being got up for the amusement of the patients.

Nurse Hyde being an old hand at private theatricals, was appointed stage manager, but she soon found that "circumstances alter cases." It was one thing to organise a play at Hyde Abbey, when every guest and neighbour had leisure for costume making, part learning and rehearsals, and the chief difficulty lay in getting the subordinate parts undertaken properly. But with a staff of busy doctors and nurses, whose daily work had to be continued, and extra Christmas duties fulfilled, it was quite another matter, and Elizabeth's powers of organisation were taxed to the uttermost.

The play once chosen, the costumes were cut out and arranged during "off duty" hours; they were then finished by Jemima Dawson, a lame girl, who for many years had been an in-patient at the Infirmary. It had been necessary, finally, to amputate her right leg, and when she recovered, the post of sewing maid was given to her, and she was thus able to turn her talent for exquisite needlework to good account.

The probationers and nurses had not much time for extra sewing, as, when on night duty, the matron expected them to help make all the garments, which, on Christmas Eve, would be distributed to the patients.

Some of the women were well enough to help make up wreathing for the decoration of the wards. Nurse Hyde invented a novel flower basket for holding winter greens. She tied three bottle cases of straw together in a fan shape, and hung them upon the walls, with wide scarlet ribbon bows, connecting each group of baskets with long chains of holly wreathing. Even more effective designs were carried out by Nurse Brauns, a new German probationer, who had lately arrived at the Infirmary, and whose pangs of "Heimweh" were assuaged by the sight of the Christmas tree.

"I did not know that you, in England, did here, as we in Germany, the Christmas customs keep?"

"O yes," innocently replied Sister Margaret, "I believe there is very little difference in the way we keep Christmas."

She was mistaken. There was one custom not generally observed by the English, which Nurse Brauns put in practice on Christmas morning.

Sister Margaret was attending to a serious case, when she saw the fair-haired German girl enter the men's accident ward; her rosy face beaming with good will. What she said to the patient nearest the door the sister could not hear, but the hearty kiss which followed the greeting was patent to all. Passing to the second bed, Nurse Brauns repeated her cheery words and emphatic kiss. The third patient, a merry Irish boy, was ready, leaning upon his elbow, to receive and return the salutation, but by this time Sister Margaret had reached the bedside, and taking the offender by the arm, she led her into the passage, and sternly demanded an explanation.

"It is our custom! our Christmas greeting. You to me did say that here in England, you the same as we in Germany did do. Is it that I a mistake do make?"

Suppressing her inward amusement, Sister Margaret explained that the men were not accustomed to such greetings even on Christmas morning; and as the Matron had just sent for an extra probationer to help in the women's medical ward, she took Nurse Brauns across to Block A, where her talents could have free scope, without unduly exciting the patients' mirth.

Here, Nurse Hyde was very busy. Special beds had been prepared over night, for the usual cases of burning, which arrive at almost every hospital on Christmas Eve. Three of these beds were already occupied. Nurse Brauns' first work was to raise an old woman, who had slipped down from her pillows, being helpless with rheumatism.

"Thank you, Nurse; you see, I gets fainty like, and to-day I'm all of a tremble, for we were fairly scared last night by the goings on."

"What to you did happen?" enquired Nurse Brauns.

"Well, Nurse, we were just dozing off, when four policemen and an inspector brought in a case of *d.t.*, and as the small wards were all full she had to be put over there." Mrs. Barton pointed with a

trembling hand to the far end of the ward, where two high screens closely surrounded the bed. "She lay quiet enough for an hour or two, after she had swallowed a draught, and then she woke up and said 'the night nurse needed exercise.' She tore up and down the room, sweepin' all the porringers and trays off the tables! O the noise and the smashin'! We lay and shook, thinkin' she'd be on us every moment, but before Nurse could catch her she was back in bed laughin'! She's asleep now, poor soul. 'Tis her child yonder that's so badly burnt."

The probationer watched Nurse Elizabeth's gentle handling of a little girl, whose face and arms were swathed in lint, and whose sufferings were mercifully lulled by opiates.

"She's a good one," said Mrs. Barton appreciatively, "and some of the patients, they don't spare her a bit. They seems to think nurses are made of iron, and can be on their feet for fourteen hours without gettin' tired, and as I tells them, 'taint in nature, their faculties can't stand it, Nurse, they are but mortal. I have been six months in this infirmary, and why I didn't come in afore I can't think, so comfortable they makes you. Not that I haven't a good home of my own, but 'tis lonesome lyin' all day while my old man's at work. I look to go back to him in the spring. We've a nice four room cottage and a garden. Barton, he's a terrible man for greenstuff; why, he'd eat cresses three times a day, if I'd get 'em for him, or young nasturtion leaves, with bread and butter. There ain't nothing like 'em in his opinion."

"Who takes care of him while you are away? Have you a daughter at home?"

Mrs. Barton's face changed as she answered gently, "Yes, we have a daughter, but she's in Heaven. Don't you mention her to my old man, for he can't trust himself to speak of her to anyone but me. You see it was this way, my husband he worked for Farmer England, and in those days, when thrashing time came on, we women had to feed the machines. 'Twas nasty, dangerous work, a-standing on a board that got slippery with the straw, and the wind a-blowing your petticoats about. Barton, he made me always tie a big calico aporn tight over my skirts, but 'twas no use, one windy day the sharp teeth caught me, and afore I knew what had happened, I were lying 'on the ground all torn and mangled, and never no use again in my left leg. Barton, he were terrible upset, and when

Farmer England says as how Sally was old enough to take my place, he up and spoke his mind. "That no woman ought to work on them machines." But 'twarn't any good, if Sally wouldn't work, we might go, and he would find someone who wasn't afeard! So Sally went, and afore the thrashing was over, there comed a day when I was still in the hospital, and Barton, he saw a crowd round the machine, and it stopped working all of a sudden like—and when he went to see, a neighbour ran out and held him back. But my old man guessed, and he broke away and got past them all to where what was left of our Sally's broken body lay, and he never said a word, he didn't even seem to see the master, but he gathered her up in his arms and carried her home. But the parson and the neighbours were good to us, and when my old man heard that the Squire had given orders that never another woman was to work on them machines, and that he would never rest till he'd gotten a law passed to make his order good all over the land, why Barton, he fairly broke down, and said as how Sally's death had saved a many other lives, and he just went and got out her school sampler and hung it by his armchair so as to have a bit of her work beside him always, and he's never lonely, for all the children runs after him and calls him Grandfather." Mrs. Barton's voice faltered. "I think, Nurse, if you'd turn me over, I'd go to sleep awhile."

Nurse Elizabeth had overheard, and after placing a tall screen to keep the light from the brave old eyes, she administered a strong cup of beef tea, and was glad to see the old woman, soon afterwards, sleeping peacefully like a little child.

Another week passed, and then one day, as Elizabeth was passing the men's accident ward, Sister Margaret came hurriedly out, as if seeking for someone.

"Ah, Nurse, can you help me? That poor little Irish lad has been sinking fast, and I cannot understand what he keeps saying. He cannot last long. Do come and see if you can make out what he wishes. He seems to be asking for money."

Nurse Hyde bent over the bed and listened.

"Sure, and it's only twopence," she heard him say. "I'll not be able to face her without them."

"What can the boy mean?" wondered Sister Margaret.

"I think I know, for I have heard the same thing when I was staying in Ireland. The peasants believe that they must be buried in

white, with white socks on their feet, or the Virgin Mary will not admit them to Heaven. Is it white socks you want, Mickey?" she asked, taking one of the wandering hands into her own and gently pressing some pennies between the slender fingers.—"Here is the money to buy them."

The boy's face lighted up. "God bless you, lady," he whispered. "All white now." Then he started up in bed, and exclaimed, "Sure, there's the golden glory, and Mickey can go straight in."

The pennies fell from his grasp, and the nurses laid him gently down, thankful for the happy ending of his short suffering life.

* * * *

The Matron's special supper party for the nurses was given this week, and with a vivid recollection of the same entertainment which had taken place the year before, the nurses attended with very mixed feelings.

Some of the Christmas duties were a heavy tax upon their pockets. No one grudged the collection for the ward-maids, porters and post-man, but at Zoughton it was customary to present the matron with a handsome annual gift.

This was chosen by Miss Jeune, the assistant matron, who also collected the subscriptions. At some hospitals the matrons wisely refuse to receive any presents, remembering their own slender income in bygone probationer days; but at Zoughton no such scruples disturbed Mrs. Wyles's equanimity. She smiled sweetly at the nurses, and thanked them for their kindness, then pointing to the tea table, remarked genially, "The silver teapot you gave me last year looks very handsome, does it not? It is a pity there was not a cream jug and sugar basin with it, then the set would have been complete."

During a moment of appalled silence, a wave of surprise, confusion and amusement flashed over all the assembled faces, except the placid speaker's. Then Nurse O'Brien made a totally irrelevant remark, and in an unusual buzz of conversation the supper party was concluded.

The following year brought a new experience to Nurse Hyde. She was sent to a serious case of illness in a parish seven miles away from Zoughton.

"The squire and his wife are abroad," explained Mrs. Wyles, "but you will have your meals at 'The Warren,' and the house-

keeper will take care of you; if you drive first to Dr. Geogehan's, he will give you instructions about the case and direct you to the Cottage."

It was a beautiful day in February when Elizabeth Hyde started, and when once clear of the town and suburbs, she felt as if driving into Fairyland, so wonderful was the winter scenery in its early morning dress of hoar-frost.

Gigantic elm trees stood up against the blue sky, with every twig and limb apparently carved in white coral, a light mist curled off the surface of the river where the dab-chicks and coots scuttered to and fro. Every reed and rush bore a plume of soft white feathers, and in the clear atmosphere one could see for miles over the brilliant, dazzling whiteness. It was quite a relief to turn into the Park gates and drive through the shade of the beech and boxwood avenues. Here the world was still white, but the trees arched across the road, with their arms outstretched and boughs interlaced, as if Nature was performing a veritable country dance. Out in this fairy frost world, Elizabeth could have spent many happy hours, but all too soon she reached her destination, and was kindly greeted by the old doctor.

"Glad to see you, Nurse. Let me get into your fly, and show you the way at once to Mrs. Drew's; she is in sad need of your services."

A rough drive of a mile, through narrow lanes and across a common, brought them to an isolated thatched cottage.

Drew was one of the farm labourers, and earned twelve shillings a week; out of this he used to say he fed and clothed himself, his wife and six children, but he omitted to mention that he had his cottage and garden rent free, that warm blankets and clothing were given by the Squire every winter, and that he had leave to trap as many rabbits as he liked for the family consumption. The wages of the two elder boys added five shillings weekly to their father's earnings, and the younger lads were able to attend to the pig, and help work in the garden.

But where comfort and order might have reigned, Nurse Elizabeth found only dirt and neglect. Mrs. Drew had been ill for many weeks, and had finally broken down with a severe attack of blood-poisoning. Her mother, Mrs. Smith, then arrived to take care of her. She was a tall, dark-eyed old woman, and spent most of her time smoking beside the fire, and occasionally hobbling upstairs to

lean over the footboard of the bed, and ask in piercing tones, "Is she *going* yet, Nurse?"

This question Mrs. Drew generally answered for herself, with an emphatic denial, and downstairs the old gipsy would hobble to prepare some meal for the children. The cottage possessed but three plates, two knives and forks, and one spoon. During Mrs. Drew's illness the children had broken the china, and lost all small or portable articles.

Poor little souls! They had a walk of nearly two miles to school, across ploughed fields, and never went either to church or Sunday-school.

Nurse Elizabeth first banished the old carpet from the bedroom, and then scrubbed and cleaned the boards and walls. She made friends with a respectable woman, who lived in the only neighbouring cottage, and there she cooked food for the patient. The fireplace at Mrs. Drew's was an old-fashioned one, in a receding wide-mouthed chimney; here Nurse tried one day to boil some fish, which the doctor had brought for the sick woman, but Dr. Geogehan arriving before the whiting was quite cooked, Elizabeth drew the saucepan back upon the hob, and found it, after the doctor's departure, filled to the brim with earth, by the two little boys, who had watched her cooking preparations with the undisguised interest of a couple of intelligent monkeys.

For two months Nurse Hyde continued daily to minister to the wants, not only of the sick woman, but of the younger children also; the old mother was apparently hopelessly ignorant and obstinate.

"I don't hold with hospital nurses myself," she would say. "I've been in hospitals, and I *knows 'em*; give me the simple remedies we used to have, there's a power of good in them. Many's the cough I've cured with my mixture. Equal parts of vinegar, treacle and mustard; give half a tumblerful when the cough is bad, and in a few minutes you feel it drawin' to your finger ends, and all over ye. If the cough goes on, give *another* dose. I've *never* known a man need to come back for a third!"

"Do you believe in doctors, even if you don't approve of nurses?" asked Elizabeth.

Mrs. Smith nodded meditatively. "Yes, some's good; old Dr. Geogehan, now, he's the right sort. My husband, he used to be the

carpenter and undertaker in the village yonder, and *many's the job he's put in his way!*"

Apparently the dreadful old woman thought the doctor failed to understand her daughter's case, for nothing induced her to obey orders. After a serious relapse, Nurse Hyde had sat up many nights as well as days, and only left the patient at sunrise to return to "The Warren" for her daily bath and change of garments, getting back to the cottage just as the morning meal was in progress.

"I've given my darter her breakfast, Nurse."

"Not any of that, I hope," exclaimed Elizabeth, pointing to a heavy dripping cake which was black with currants.

"I did," was the defiant answer, "an' she relished it fine, and one o' my large green apples too. Don't see what you want to make a fuss about *that* for."

As it was too late to do anything but await the result of such unsuitable diet, Nurse Hyde said little, and curiously enough Mrs. Drew took a turn for the better, and finally recovered.

"All along of *me*," her old mother used to say. "If I'd 'a let the doctor have his way and starved her much longer wi' milk possets, where'd she 'a been now?"

Elizabeth made many friends during her daily walks to and from "The Warren," for she had to pass through the village to get to Dr. Geogehan's house with her daily report of the case.

"You don't look very well to-day, Mrs. Bone," she said to a little old woman who was peering over her cottage gate, and evidently longing for a word of sympathy.

"Indeed, miss, I don't feel well; just all of a shrim! For poor Mrs. Shipton, she *is* bad; I met her just now in the road, and you might have knocked me down with a feather, the sight give me such a turn. I couldn't go a-nigh her, I just turned and *ran*, and sat down all of a tremble till I could get to the kettle and make a cup o' tea."

"But where is Mrs. Shipton, and what is the matter?"

"She *said* she'd chopped her thumb off with the axe, and indeed it looked as if it was true, such a sight! She's in Mrs. Brown's cottage."

Propped up in an armchair in front of the fire, Nurse Elizabeth found Mrs. Shipton, fortunately in such a dead faint that the bleeding had ceased.

"She's lain a faint so long, Nurse, that the farrier said we'd best shake her up a bit, like they do to a horse in a fit, but it don't seem much good."

Nurse Elizabeth soon had the poor old woman upstairs on a clean bed, and tying up the wounded hand, with difficulty restored consciousness. It was indeed a nasty cut, and one that as soon as Dr. Geogehan had attended to, he decided would be safer in the Infirmary for a while, where Mrs. Shipton could be kept quietly in bed without using the injured hand, so she drove away the next day with Nurse Elizabeth, who was returning to the Infirmary.

(To be continued.)

Hot Words.

Pain and tears, tears and pain,
 Hot words said, conn'd o'er again ;
 Night and day, day and night,
 Yearning eyes seem aye in sight ;
 You loved me so, not long ago,
 Now, you love me never ;
 Your piteous cry at parting nigh,
 The bitterness of our "good-bye"
 Will haunt me, hurt me, till I die,
 For ever, Love! for ever!

Sing and laugh, laugh and sing,
 Gladness glints o'er everything,
 Night and day, day and night,
 Hot words said, forgotten quite ;
 Sweetheart! I know you loved me so,
 No scorn, your love could sever ;
 Past is pride, whate'er betide,
 Leaving love, by trouble tried,
 You and I, still side by side,
 For ever, Love! for ever!

The Rubber Gatherers:

A STORY OF THE NIGER.

By HAROLD BINDLOSS,

Author of "RISING OF THE BRASSMEN," "ON THE ROAD TO BENIN," etc.

Two sun-scorched white men, clad in tattered karki garments, lay enjoying a brief noonday rest amid the tall plume-grass which fringed the bank of a winding creek, far in the heart of the savage wilderness of forest and swamp that surrounds the waters of the Niger.

The muddy stream rolled sluggishly before them; its yellow waters flashing in the sun glare until it was lost in the misty forest; and upon the further bank, beyond the feathery oil palms, whose curving fronds overhung the water, the silent cottonwood bush stretched away into the unknown distance.

It was fiercely hot, and the two Europeans lay half-buried in the grass, trying in vain to hide themselves from the burning rays; while a dozen naked krooboys basked upon the bare, hard trodden earth beside the bank, soaking in the heat like salamanders. "Long Dane" flintlock guns and sharply filed matchets were piled beside them, for there is generally trouble in the Niger delta. The ways of the fierce river tribes are hard to understand, and a white man who travels unarmed through the remote swamps does so at the peril of his life.

Presently, Frank Jardine, trader in rubber and palm-kernels, rose from his lair among the grass, and shaking the yellow dust of the plumes from him, observed angrily, "As the bushmen say, this country was made for the black man, and the European who tries to live in it deserves what he suffers. Once we clear the rubber off that knoll, I'll quit—even if I have to sell matches at home. It's a ghastly place."

His companion, David Thornton, who was if possible more ragged and dusty than Jardine, laughed softly as he answered, "Impulsive as usual. You needn't abuse the country, there's a hundred pounds' worth of rubber in the two canoes, and five hundred pounds' worth more ready for us on the knoll when we can get it out. Four days to reach

Sapelli, a week to collect more men and canoes, and get back—I hope Jim can hold out that long.”

Jardine's face grew thoughtful, and he answered, “I didn't like leaving him, but one of us could never have got through alone. He has a score of fighting men, and even if the river tribes find him out they can't get at him through the swamps. It's sickness I'm afraid of—strange, isn't it, that wherever rubber thrives Europeans die. We must start again in an hour and paddle all night; the sooner we get back the better.”

Then the silence of Africa settled down upon the camp, emphasized, not broken, by the oily gurgle of the river and the dry rustle of the palms. Later, something long and black drifted into sight round a bend of the creek, forming an indistinct blur upon the dazzling water, with a haze of heat quivering round it; and Jardine said carelessly, “An alligator or a rotten cottonwood log—the rains have started higher up, and the river's rising at last.”

Thornton shaded his eyes with his hands, and gazed at the approaching object long and carefully as it drifted towards them—he had a way of noticing small things. Then he said sharply, “No, it's a canoe with a man in it—he has clothes on too;” a sudden clamour rose from the krooboyes on the bank. The canoe floated steadily on, with what appeared to be a bundle of rags lying in the stern—a streak of grey cottonwood and a patch of raw blue, upon the shimmering river—until it swung round and round in a sluggish eddy, abreast of the camp; and all the time the limp figure lay very quiet and still in the stern.

“Launch the canoe and bring that thing ashore,” said Jardine, and a few moments later the light craft grounded among the tufted reeds, “Uniform of French Senegalis—been dead a day or two,” said the trader, turning the body gently over. Then he raised his voice, “Stand clear all of you—smallpox it is,” and the clustering krooboyes fled for their lives, while Jardine shuddered, for he had seen a bush village swept clean by the pestilence, more than once. Afterwards, with a choking in his throat, he drew a roll of moist paper from the breast of the ragged tunic; and puzzling over the sprawling writing read aloud, “Cap des Hauts Palmiers—a moi secours. Any white man help me or I die quick and alone. Launch Temeraire by tall palm—Senegalli all gone. Pour l'amour de——” The rest is illegible. What do you make of this?” he asked with a puzzled face.

"It's very simple," said Thornton gravely. "You remember the French gunboat that went up the river—the Flamboyant, wasn't it? Well, her launch has come to grief—surveying. The French have taken an unmitigated interest in the Niger lately. Usual story, negro crew deserted or dead, and one white man left aboard, sick with fever—or smallpox."

"We must get him out, can't let the poor wretch die, even if we are palm oil ruffians. Palmtree Point isn't very far, and one more risk doesn't count in Africa," broke in Jardine.

Thornton answered slowly, "No, but it means leaving Jim a week longer in that pestilential swamp, with the chance of being murdered by the gin smugglers. Five hundred pounds' worth of rubber is a good deal to us, too," and the traders looked at one another in silence for a space.

Then Jardine, the impulsive, raised his voice, "Launch them canoe, onetime, Krooboy."

His companion bent his head, after which he ground his heels into the mould, saying, "Confound that Frenchman."

Half an hour later the canoes vanished into a side creek; while the Senegali messenger, his last journey over, slept peacefully beneath the rustling palms, with his face towards the east, as befits a faithful Mussulman.

On the canoes went, across broad lagoons, and through a maze of tangled backwaters winding through the heart of the steamy forest; the white men swinging over the leaf-shaped blades among the Krooboy, in spite of the sweltering heat, as the full-throated paddling chorus, "Acha ho-hyah halla ho," and the songs of the Kroo nation rang out through the listless air.

On the evening of the second day, they paddled very faintly and wearily up a broad river-reach, when even the amphibious Krooboy, born to the use of the paddle, declared they could go no further.

"Keep it up—half an hour more, and one piece of cloth dash all round," said Jardine, mopping the perspiration from his forehead, while Thornton gazed anxiously forward over the bows. The sun had just dipped behind the shadowy forest, and the western heavens blazed with saffron and orange, against which the summits of the tall palms that overtopped the cottonwoods stood out black and sharp, a lace-like tracery of feathery fronds in a setting of red-gold. A lurid, crimson glow flashed along the oily water until it resembled a river of

blood, while heavy wreaths of fever mist crawled slowly forth from every reeking swamp, and spread themselves across its shining surface.

"Dark in half an hour; the frogs are beginning already—there's a leopard, too," said Thornton, as a long, eerie howl rang out through the stillness of the cottonwoods. "These must be the palms; where's the stranded launch?"

"Paddle, there, you Krooboy, or no gin have to-night," shouted Jardine, and the tired negroes swung wearily over the dripping blades, while the saffron glory paled and faded, and the mist went up in columns, like the steam of a great cauldron. "There she is at last," said Jardine, pointing to a shadowy object looming out through the drifting vapour. The Krooboys raised a shout, the paddles whirled amid a chorus of whistles and hisses; and a few minutes later the two canoes shot grinding alongside a big steam launch lying on an even keel, with her bows wedged hard and fast in a bank of bubbling ooze.

The white men swung themselves on board, and the negroes made fast the canoes; but there was no sound nor sign of life upon the deck, only rusty iron, tattered awnings, sun-blistered paint, and silence—a silence that could be felt, while darkness closed down upon river and forest, and the mist wrapped them round like a clammy shroud.

A ghastly place—boring crabs in charge too. "No, you don't, you brute," said Jardine, and he set his foot upon a loathsome, hairy-legged creature, which scuttled towards him holding a big mandible threateningly in the air.

"Get below and find a lamp or something, before the place gets upon our nerves and the Krooboys bolt; they're not far from it now," said Thornton; and the two men descended the tiny companion. "Thank goodness, here's a lamp," he observed, and when Jardine struck a match a smoky yellow glow illuminated the little cabin, falling upon the wasted form and sunken cheeks of a European, who lay upon a cushioned locker with legions of swamp flies crawling across him. The traders started at the sight, then, as the sick man, blinking in the sudden light, his dim eyes upon them, Jardine knelt beside him, and raising the sufferer's head, held a flask to his blackened lips.

"Ah," gasped the fever-stricken Frenchman, "Je vous en—you are very kind. *Grace à—*" and his eyelids closed.

"Hold up, don't faint," said the trader, "down with it again," and the sick man gasped for breath as a second dose of the spirit was poured down his throat. Then he raised himself on one elbow, and, afterwards, with the Englishman's strong arms about his shoulders, stammered out the pitiable story.

"I am Sous-Lieutenant Oger, the launch is of gunboat Flamboyant. She stick here much of time, and the Senegali they die—how you call it, small, small?—I send a boat and half men to Warri for help, and five stop. They die too; the last, he go in canoe with letter. Mais alors——"

"Excuse me, Lieutenant," interjected Jardine, and laying the Frenchman down, he broke in the head of a case of provisions which lay upon the floor. Then, turning to Thornton, he added, "Don't sit gaping there. What's this—soup? Make some quick, there's a galley forward; hunt around for wine, you're sure to find it. Hurry, for he's going off again," and kneeling down, he loosened the sufferer's tunic, and chafed the clammy hands, wondering if he was not running a greater risk than that of ambush and poison, but calmly prepared to face it all. The shadow of death broods heavily over the fever-haunted swamp-land, and one danger more is of little moment beside the lower waters of the Niger, where a white man's life hangs by a single thread.

By the time the steaming soup was brought the Frenchman came round, and, dosing it liberally with wine, Jardine fed him with a spoon, until the sufferer gasped, "Cela suffit. You are good, all Englishmen are not so: one black launch, she will not sell me drug when my men they die."

Jardine sprang to his feet. "May they be many times condemned—I know the crowd," he said. "If they had their way, there'd be no trader but themselves on all the river," and he abused his rivals fluently and forcibly, for five minutes, without repeating himself once.

"Ah, he is droll, ce monsieur—but I do not understand," said the Frenchman, with the ghost of a smile flickering in his eyes.

And Thornton answered, "Yes, he is unique in that kind of thing, even for Africa, and he has a genuine grievance too." Then he added, "When you've quite finished that exhibition, Frank, we'll talk."

Jardine stopped in his angry stride, and turning to the Lieutenant,

said gently, "Soyez tranquille, monsieur, we'll pull you through," and propping the sufferer's shoulders with a roll of palm matting, he bathed the hot forehead until the Frenchman's eyes closed.

"Frank," said Thornton, when they had satisfied their hunger, "has it ever struck you yet, that virtue is sometimes rewarded?"

"No," was the laughing answer, "it's generally the other way about, there's no room for virtue in Africa; but speak plainly, it's too hot for conundrums."

"Well," said Thornton, "you were always dense. Here we have a launch fit to steam ten knots, machine guns and coal. What's to hinder us going through the creeks and bringing off Jim and that rubber, in the teeth of all the heathen of the Niger?"

The listener smote his thigh. "We'll do it," he said. "The river's rising fast, and we'll have her off to-morrow—though you'll have to work as you never did in your life. A little rough on the French navy, isn't it?"

Then the sick man moved restlessly to and fro, muttering something in his own tongue, for the malaria delirium was upon him, and Jardine translated, "Says he served the flag with honor, and it's hard to leave his bones here among the rotting swamps. We must pull the poor wretch through some way. If we can come across the 'Nupe,' I'll fill that black captain's heart with the fear of death until he's glad to give us the whole of the medicine chest. I've done it before."

Thornton laughed softly, then he said drowsily, "You might not come off so well as you did last time—Sparkestone is at Akassar now—but I'm dead tired."

Afterwards the silence of Africa settled down. The Krooboyes were fast asleep in the canoes; Thornton lay in deep slumber upon the opposite locker; but Jardine, the impulsive, in spite of the fatigue he had undergone and the work that lay before him on the morrow, kept watch by the Lieutenant's side, bathing the wax-like forehead from time to time, or moistening the blackened lips.

Before the sun rose across the palms, a trail of yellow smoke streamed aloft from the launch's funnel; then, amid much shouting and splashing, ropes were taken across to the opposite bank and made fast to the palms. When the first golden arrows of light streamed down from the rosy east the little winch hammered and panted away under an over-pressure of steam, the Krooboyes whistled, hissed and hauled; while the propeller whirling hard astern threw up

a cataract of yellow foam. At last, shivering and trembling, with the mud sucking beneath her keel, the launch slid off into deep water, afloat once more.

Thornton came up out of the engine cockpit, for every trader among the tangled Niger creeks knows how to run a launch, a disreputable, ragged object, covered with coal dust, rust and grease; but the light of triumph was in his eyes, and he turned to his companion, who was dancing a can-can on the foredeck, while the grinning Krooboyes helped themselves to unlimited gin, and said, "When you've quite done fooling, you might get those ropes aboard and take the wheel. I'll look after the Frenchman, the poor fellow's raving mad—listen to him." Then the unabashed Jardine grasped the wheel, and towing the two canoes behind her, the launch churned her way up the yellow stream.

Three days passed, and then soon after sunrise they steamed up a narrow creek, where the great cottonwood boughs stretched far out over stagnant water and tanks of putrescent mud. The air was clammy with rising mist, and foul with the odours of rotting vegetation in the swamps ahead, and as the gurgling wash of the propeller lapped among the tangled roots, sickening exhalations rose from the bubbling ooze. A ragged shirt flapping from the topmost bough of a dead cottonwood caught Jardine's eye, and he broke out into a wild "hurrah." Then he shouted excitedly, for a fleet of canoes stole across the creek, half veiled in the drifting mist, with gun barrel and matchet glinting among the naked black skins of the negro crews, as they swung to and fro over the dripping blades.

There was a splashing of paddles, and several flintlock guns flashed amid the vapour, while Jardine shouted, "I know them by the blue tattoo and knitted hair. It's the gin smuggling tribe that threatened the Brass Consulate."

"So I perceive," said Thornton coolly. "Open the throttle wide. I never used a machine gun before, but I'm going to try it now." Next he ran forward, and kneeling behind the shield in the bows, swung the long brown barrel on its pivot, while Jardine, setting his teeth, held the steel prow of the launch straight for the centre of the knot of canoes. A moment later, the forepart of the launch was veiled in smoke, out of which rose a quick, grinding crash, and a rapid succession of steel-tipped projectiles hurtled through the cottonwoods, and whirled up fountains of slime as they buried themselves in the mud of the swamps.

A babel of howls and yells rose into the steamy air; there was a sputtering of villainous "trade powder" in flintlock guns, and a shower of broken cast-iron pot tore through the awnings; then Jardine spun round the wheel, and the launch's bows plunged right among the canoes. The light cottonwood crumpled up like cardboard before the bow; the water was strewn with paddles and swimming heads; and with a triumphant scream from her whistle, the little vessel hissed on up the creek, while the light flotilla of uninjured canoes fled madly down the river, the terrified tribesmen whirling their long paddles for dear life. When the last had vanished, and the regular "chunk, chunk" grew fainter and fainter out of the mist, Thornton came aft.

"None of our fellows touched, and I don't think I hit anyone either, though they got a fright. It's just as well, for the Protectorate might have made trouble, and I was getting mixed about the cartridge band." Then he started, as a ringing double report awakened all the echoes of the forest, and said, "We've come in time, there's Jim's Express."

Five minutes later the launch was moored alongside a knoll, rising like an island out of an awful desolation of oozy, rotting swamps; and a haggard white man walked wearily on board. After a silent hand grip all round, he said huskily, "I'm glad you've come. The bushmen have been hanging round for a week, some of the Nimbi tribe, and I've been on the watch night and day—thought they were going to rush us at last. The Krooboys have got the 'craw-craw' too, and I'm afraid of it myself," and Jardine shuddered—he knew the terrible skin-disease which is caused by the handling of damp rubber. Then the new comer continued, "But what's this? Where did you get the navy launch?"

Jardine told the story, and Jim Crossthwaite chuckled as he listened. Afterwards he said, "You're a wonderful man, Thornton—it's too good a joke. If you made up your mind to get the King of Benin's ivory, you'd manage it somehow. But give me something to eat, and we'll get the rubber on board and clear before the river men come back and bring their friends. I've been here too long already."

Jardine went below to prepare food and explain matters to their patient, but the Frenchman lay raving and burning in the grip of the fever, and understood nothing of all that passed.

All that day white man and Krooboy worked with desperate

energy, in spite of the burning heat and the sickening exhalations of the swamps. Calabash after calabash of viscous green paste, and coil after coil of slimy, amorphous rubber, which had been wound about a man's arm dipped in brine, was stowed away below and piled high on deck; and before sunset the launch steamed out of the creek, towing the smitten Krooboys astern.

When darkness closed down, the three white men lay about upon the cabin floor, cheerful in mind, and utterly worn out in body, though when at last the lieutenant opened his eyes, and feebly sat up, Jardine shook the drowsiness from him and fed his patient with food ready prepared.

"I am better—yes, the madness is gone. Grace a votre bonté, but what is this—this, cet odeur d'enfer?" he said, and the listeners laughed, as Jardine translated literally, for, if there is anything in the world which possesses an effluvia worse than the nauseating, fetid smell of raw African rubber, it must be very hard to find. Thornton proceeded somewhat shamefacedly to explain, and once a red flash burned in the sick man's hollow cheeks; but when the narrative was finished, his dim eyes sparkled, and holding out a trembling, claw-like hand, he said, "You have save my life—and the launch too. The rubber, what does it matter—but the kindness, yes. You are wonderful peoples, you English, but it's always the trade. We others consider la gloire."

"Yes, yes, that's all right, but you lie down again and sleep," said Thornton soothingly. "We're off for the coast now, and you're getting better every hour." Then he turned down the swinging lamp and crawled forward to the machinery cockpit. Soon there was silence below, and with a grizzled old Krooman at the wheel, the launch hissed along between parallel walls of solemn forest, the broad moonlit river breaking away into wreaths of silvery foam before the thrust of her keen bows, the gurgling wash lapping noisily among the reeds ashore, and the panting of her high-pressure engines, disturbing the stillness which hung heavily over the shadowy bush.

When morning came, she was far down the river on her way to the settlements; the sick Frenchman was carried on deck and made comfortable beneath the awnings, and the three traders lay about beside him, telling stories both ghastly and grotesque about the savage land of swamp and creek. Dense cottonwood forest choked with gorgeous hued creepers; clusters of feathery palms, beneath whose feet grew

crimson spike-flowers and the tall white African lilies; and awful desolations of rotting swamps, opened up and faded away astern as the little vessel churned her way across many a broad lagoon, down broad river-reaches, or twisted in and out of the mazy creeks: for in the Niger delta there are waterways everywhere.

In places the air was heavy and foul with the exhalations of rotting vegetation and festering mud. In others, the aromatic odour of burning wood betoken the vicinity of a native town; while now and then the listless breeze was filled with the fragrance of lilies and an odour as of frankincense, myrrh and all manner of spices, until on the third day the dingy, leather-leaved mangroves announced their approach to the coast.

Great was the astonishment of the white officials of the Niger Coast Protectorate Consulate at Nepas Konokri as the launch steamed up the creek and made fast to their wharf. The Vice Consul smiled grimly when the three adventurers told their story, and he said, "Yes, I believe that swamp is in our dominions, if your bearings are correct, and I can give you papers to work it. You did well to come to me at once, for if the other powers had heard of it they would probably have claimed it as their territory—you understand." Jardine did, he knew by bitter experience what the monopolists could do, and the officer continued, "However, I don't think I'd use that launch again. It isn't quite the thing, and might lead to trouble."

With the courtesy and kindness for which the Protectorate officials are justly famed, the sick Lieutenant was received and cared for at the Consulate, and was about again when the gunboat *Flamboyant* descended the Kwarra and sent a crew from Forcados to bring back officer and launch. By this time the three traders were back again with a strong party in the wild bush, and when they returned, months later, a letter and a packet awaited them at the Nepas Konokri Consulate. Whether the grateful Lieutenant ever told all the story is doubtful, for the packet contained two gold watches with inscriptions upon them; and Jardine said as he read the graven thanks, "We must go and look Oger up some of these days; two more lucky trips and we can clear out of Africa altogether. No rubber worth anything on the Niger, say the Gold Coast people; perhaps there's not, if you sit down and wait for the niggers to bring you rubbish, but if a man will run the risk and go up and look for it, there's better rubber in these swamps than ever came out of Lagos or Acera."

"Sanguine as ever," said Thornton smiling, and the Government officer added :

"If they gave you watches for that affair, I wonder what you would have got if you had borrowed the gunboat too and filled her up with palm oil."

The European population in the Niger delta changes every three years or so, through fever and other causes ; but a good story lives on, and when men sit panting on the broad verandahs through the sweltering evenings, too listless even to play cards or smoke, there is one narrative which will long be told. That is, how three presumptuous traders, Palm-oil ruffians, as they are called on the coast, annexed a portion of the French navy to bring down their evil-smelling rubber through the tangled creeks.

Records of History.

By BEATRICE E. CLENNELL.

Not in books only is written the history of this old earth of ours. Like her human children, her story is written upon her face, but it is not given to all to read.

Dimly the geologist may discern the meaning of the main contours, and can tell us what passion of long ago caused a wrinkle here or a furrow there. There are, however, traces of more recent emotions, not so huge perhaps but appealing to us more intimately. Many of these scratches, blotches, and patches, are fresh wounds, and (sad to relate!) have been inflicted by Earth's own and youngest child, man. Yet, it is injustice to speak of all at any rate as wounds. The far-off inhabitant of Mars may recognise but scars and scratches but now and again we have adorned our great Mother with fair cities, with temple and palace, with monuments of kingly power, wealth, and heroism. In the old days monumental record was almost the only one.

Of all races the Egyptians have striven hardest to leave perfect records behind them. There is something profoundly

pathetic in this struggle to live for ever in the world's history, and they have many a tale worth hearing to relate. Who has ever looked at Egyptian sculpture without marvelling at its remarkable preservation? We read the date beneath, 2,000, 3,000, 4,000 B.C., it seems to make no difference, the polish of the black diorite remains unscratched, hardly dimmed by time. In part it is explained by the wonderful climate of Egypt, with air clear as we in England never see it, but it is also due to this great passion for imperishable record, making possible the wonderful patience that could stop to fashion stone so hard that modern chisels break upon it. This was one method of making a record well-nigh impossible to efface.

Another plan employed by those who evidently knew and feared the hand of the Vandal, to whom nothing is sacred, was to carve inscriptions high up on the rocky sides of precipices, removing all possibility of access. This was of course only possible in mountainous regions. It was an obvious way of recording conquest, to set a mark upon the country's face that could not be obliterated. As boys carving their names upon the cliff to show how high they have climbed, so ancient conquerors have left us their names, or may-be their portraits.

Somewhat west of Lake Van, in what is now Armenia, may be seen a sculpture in the natural rock, representing a king in a walking attitude and pointing the way. The inscription tells us that this is Tukulti-Palesharra (Tiglath Pileser I.) King of Assyria. Again and again the Assyrians came down upon this ill-fated country, carrying with them the terror and desolation for which they will be for ever remembered. This happened 1,100 B.C. It may have been the first, but unhappily it was not the last, occasion upon which the Armenians have suffered cruel persecution.

In Asia Minor are numerous remains of an older civilisation than that of the Assyrians, that of the Hittites. Among these are rock sculptures and inscriptions in those strange characters that still remain one of the most puzzling of the unsolved riddles of the world. At present our knowledge of the Hittite race is vague in the extreme, but should the clue to the language be discovered we may expect the unfolding of one of the wonderful lost pages of history. Of the sculptures, one of peculiar interest, like the Assyrian example, represents an advancing warrior. It is upon the face of a rock in a

pass on the road between the ancient cities of Ephesus and Sardis, and twenty-five miles from the modern Smyrna. Herodotus relates having seen it, and that the Ionians said it represented Rameses II., the great Egyptian conqueror, but he seems to have felt some doubt. The pointed cap and felt boots alone prove to the most superficial student of ancient life that whoever he is, he is not an Egyptian. Indeed, as a Hittite, he represents the great rival of Egyptian power.

Most important of all rock carvings, because of the inscriptions that have thrown so much light upon both the history and the languages of ancient Asia, are those upon the famous Rock of Behistun. The rock is isolated and of peculiar form. On the straightest and smoothest face is the inscription, 300 feet from the base, and consequently inaccessible. How the work was originally executed is a mystery, for it was only with infinite trouble and the aid of field glasses that a copy could be made. The inscription is in three languages, and is to the glory of Darius the great Persian King. The sculpture appears to represent him receiving the homage of various nations.

Of Persian sovereigns there is one notable portrait, not a rock-carving however, but a bas-relief at Pasargadae. This is of Cyrus, famed for his noble and generous character, who was the first unmistakably good ruler in history, endeavouring to rule his people for their own welfare, not for the amassing of wealth to himself. The face is an obvious portrait, resolute, intellectual, but not beautiful, though strikingly modern in type. The trilingual inscription above is highly characteristic of the man in its simple dignity: "I am Kurush, the King, the Akhaemenian."

By extreme durability, and secondly by the difficulty of approaching the monument, its preservation was assured. A third method of recording history still remains. In countries where stone is not abundant, another material has been pressed into service, and this is clay. The making of bricks and tiles was a great art brought to high perfection in the ancient land of Chaldea, but it is a somewhat startling idea to us that "books" also should be made of clay. Thus were the wonderful annals of the great Assyrian nation handed down to posterity. A wedge-shaped tool was pressed upon the clay while moist, hence arising those curious characters known as cuneiform. The tablet when baked was

singularly durable; neither fire nor water could harm it, and though Nineveh was burnt to the ground, the libraries of books have remained safely hidden beneath the débris, and little harmed by falling.

To pass on to the consideration of a few of the material records of interesting events in history, especially those that appeal to us in pictorial form.

Inscriptions of words only, and those with slight illustrations added, merge together, growing either more and more artistic or more and more literary. The first picture histories are of very symbolic character. For instance, in the very earliest of all inscriptions recording an historical event, we have one man to represent a whole nation, while the conquering king is made somewhat larger to indicate his superiority. This, an Egyptian inscription, the Sneferu tablet, dates about 4,000 B.C. The king, Sneferu, was the first monarch of the Fourth Dynasty, known as the pyramid builders. He is represented on the tablet as subduing either an Arabian or other Asiatic enemy. In like manner, in later Egyptian inscriptions, we may see Rameses III., the representative of the whole Egyptian Army, drawing his bow against a host of tiny men. The record of the victory of Shishak over the Jews is also told with characteristic terseness, by the figure of one man of Jewish countenance with his arms bound behind him.

The custom of setting up obelisks to commemorate victories was established by the Egyptians, and was imitated by the Assyrians. Unlike the Egyptians, whose passion for symbolism limited and restricted their artistic power, the Assyrians used pictorial record freely. The palace walls are covered with low relief sculpture, illustrating with careful detail great battles or famous hunts. A favourite subject among Assyrian recorders, as with all other ancient races, is that of foreigners bringing tribute; this subject was beyond all others pleasing to the proudest and most boastful of nations. Very interesting among "tribute-bearing" pictures is a certain obelisk of King Shalmeneser II. This monument is now in the British Museum. It is in the same hard black stone, or diorite, as the Egyptians so often used, but in size it is not at all according to Egyptian fancy for it is comparatively small. The four faces of the obelisk are ornamented with slightly sunk panels containing sculptured figures. Here we see men heavily laden with offerings

of gold and silver and all manner of precious vessels, or leading a fine horse or more curious animals, such as camels, elephants, and monkeys; while to throw even greater glamour upon the events of the king's reign, the artist does not hesitate to introduce an occasional fabulous monster. Yet historic value is not absent, for the obelisk claims our attention principally because it records the fact that tribute was received from Jehu, King of Israel. Beneath this statement (in the second panel from the top) is represented a man, probably Jehu himself, with his head bowed to the ground before the proud figure of the Assyrian monarch. This dates B.C. 842.

Passing onward to the next great race of conquerors, the Romans, we find that they also used their pictorial powers chiefly to glorify their great deeds. It is not tribute though that we see borne upon the shoulders of these stalwart Roman soldiers, but spoil.

Among the most famous of Roman monuments of conquest our thoughts turn instantly to the great column set up by Trajan, and to the various triumphal arches. The column is a new and highly characteristic Roman idea; and the arches were a natural development of a great national institution—the triumphal entry into Rome of the conqueror. It is easy to imagine how the streets were festooned with wreaths and temporary arches, that grew more elaborate with increasing wealth, until the light wooden framework must be replaced with something more costly and more lasting.

Roman architecture and art are seen nowhere to better advantage than in the really beautiful arch of Titus, and the spirited sculpture is full of peculiar interest, for here is the account, second only in importance to the written one of Josephus, of the Sack of Jerusalem. Very little is known of Jewish art, and not a fragment remains. This is not so astonishing when we remember the costly materials used by the wealthiest of splendour-loving Orientals. These sculptures contain our only authority upon Jewish art; here we may see the form and detail of the seven-branched candlestick, and the representation of other spoils from the Temple, the tablets used in the service, the golden table for the show-bread and the chalice.

Of all pictorial accounts of conquests the one that must claim most interest from us, not only because it records an important event in our own history, but because it is as graphic a record as possible, is the Norman conquest of England as shown in the Bayeux Tapestry. This is a new material, not the work of a people who

thought far beyond the present, or set any great value upon permanent monuments, but of a people absorbed in warlike exploits and endeavours to bring order into a disorganised state of society. The new guardians of history are therefore the monks, writing chronicles and illuminating manuscripts in the quiet of the monastery, and the ladies spending long hours in strong castles over their embroideries, while their lords are fighting in far distant lands. The Bayeux Tapestry is by repute the work of Queen Matilda, the wife of the Conqueror. It has been suggested that the actual carrying out of the design was placed in the hands of the Saxon ladies, who were celebrated for their needlework. This would seem to be a piece of most uncalled-for cruelty on the part of the conquerors, but it will be observed that the tale is told in a manner that could not possibly be galling, the Saxons fighting bravely for their country, and though William is, of course, the hero, Harold by no means figures as the villain. The story is told in seventy-two compartments, or we might say chapters, and though it is childish—even barbarous in draughtsmanship—nothing could tell with more clearness and simplicity how and why the Normans came to England.

Needlework imposes very severe limitations, so that a certain stiffness of outline is inevitable. The artist's modesty suggests short verbal explanation, thus :—"Hic exeunt caballi de navibus," "Hic residet Harold, rex Anglorum," and so on.

In the first compartment we see Harold taking leave of Edward the Confessor, and then follows his journey and landing in Normandy. The artist is evidently well acquainted with the life of the Norman court, and gives us many a vivid little sketch. The ill-fated holiday ends by Harold being detained against his will, a point that this chronicle makes tolerably clear. Then follows Harold's oath to William over the sacred relics. The following scenes show the return to England, and the death and burial of the Confessor at Westminster Abbey. This last is of peculiar interest, as being the earliest representation of the newly-built church of St. Peter at Westminster. A hand points to it from heaven, as though wishing to inform us that this is the work of the dead monarch. The crown is offered to Harold, and the coronation follows, in spite of the superstitious fear with which the appearance of a comet is viewed. The scene is now changed to Normandy, where great preparations

are taking place. The pictures showing the manner of life in the advancing Norman army are full of interest, the form of the vessels with their quaint sails, the soldiers feasting off their long-shaped shields, which form such handy tables, their armour, and their horses. It may be remarked that the designer's wish to distribute the colour has led him, or rather her, to show us horses of unusual hues, such as blue and green. The story concludes, somewhat abruptly, with a few battle scenes, and last of all, the death of Harold.

Quaint as the Bayeux Tapestry is as a work of art, there is no denying it a high place, as a contemporary and authentic record made by one evidently well acquainted with the facts; it also has the credit of being a singularly true and fair account.

The recording of history of later times falls more and more into the hands of writers of books. Yet even our own land can boast no inconsiderable number of more substantial monuments, though it can hardly compare with the time defying and colossal works of a Pharaoh, or the exalted splendour of a classic Greece or Rome. A grand tomb to a king, a number of crosses to the memory of a much loved queen, the effigies of knights who fought in the crusades, indeed do their best to tell our English history in stone. We have to thank our much abused climate, and our too energetic Puritan forefathers that this history is but a meagre one.

There is, though, an interest surpassing far that of places, and that is the supreme interest we all feel in people, in special individuals. We flock in millions to catch sight of the hero of the moment. If the actual sight is denied us, we buy a photograph or a print. What a history book could be made out of portraits alone! Does it tell us nothing to look at the vigorous face of Seti I., a little fierce but not unpleasant, with its faint and peculiarly Egyptian smile? He was a great warrior, a busy builder, and by repute the first oppressor of the Israelites in Egypt. Or is it the great Assyrian monarch, Sargon, perhaps the greatest conqueror of the ancient world, though by a strange chance his name has been lost to written histories for so many centuries? The kingly pride, the cruel indifference of the face with its strong Jewish features, are things not easy to forget. Personally like his father, but less dignified, and of coarse, more sensual aspect, is Sennacherib, far better known to popular fame.

Greek portraits are rare, those that we have are principally handed

down through Roman copies. Such are the well-known busts of Socrates, Plato, and the Athenian ruler, Pericles. These are, however, so individual as to be undoubtedly founded on fact. Of Alexander the Great there are a few, probably contemporary, portraits, and many echoes. According to tradition he only permitted one painter, Appelles, to represent him, while Lysippus, a sculptor, was permitted to make a portrait bust. However this may be, his features, and they are remarkably handsome, pervade all the sculpture of the period. We have, in the British Museum, a fine example of the type in a bust found at Alexandria; a youthful, almost boyish face, with long, thick waving hair, eager eyes, and proud defiance in the mouth, the last feature perhaps a little lacking in refinement. It is in all essentials the same head as that in the famous Pompeian mosaic, thought to represent the battle of Issus.

There is no need, perhaps, after all, to urge in England the greatness of this sort of history. For have we not our new Portrait Gallery, with its rich company of poets, painters, musicians, actors, novelists, statesmen, travellers, preachers and scientists? Indeed, it is a priceless heirloom that we are leaving for future generations.

"Festus" and its Author.

By P. B.

Or the great poets whose genius has enriched the Victorian era, none—Keats alone excepted—have acquired the right to wear the laurel wreath of Fame at such an early age as Philip James Bailey, whose poem "Festus," published when only twenty-three years of age, was hailed with unqualified praise by all the chief critics, and the literary world, both here and in America. When the identity of the author of this anonymous work became known, he was extolled as the brother of Goethe and Milton. The enthusiasm which the poem aroused in America was phenomenal; it quickly ran through numerous editions, until, up to twenty years ago no fewer than thirty were named in the Publishers' Catalogue, U.S.A., while as late

as 1884 a compilation of extracts entitled "The Beauties of Festus," has been issued by Messrs. Longman Green and Co. One of the great dramatic critics of that time, in speaking of this magnificent poem, declares "I know no poem in any language that can be compared with it in copiousness and variety of imagery. The universe is as rife with symbols to this poet as it is with facts to the common observer."

Yet despite the reputation Philip James Bailey so early acquired by the publication of his great poem "Festus," this masterpiece is less known to the modern reading public than the works of many of his contemporaries—a fact mainly due to the poet's retiring disposition, and also no doubt in a measure to the subject of the poem, dealing as it does with the fight of Faith in a world of matter. Born in 1816 at Nottingham, at a very early age he displayed a remarkable taste, partly inherited from his father, Mr. Thomas Bailey, who had a wide local reputation by the publication of "The Annals of Nottinghamshire," a most comprehensive work, dealing in general local information, both social and political. To Mr. Bailey, who was also the proprietor and editor of "The Nottingham Mercury," the early literary proclivities of his son were doubtless a source of gratification, and he assiduously cultivated the young scholar's pronounced talent. His studies were carried on in Nottingham under the best masters, and in 1831 Philip James Bailey matriculated at Glasgow; but quitted college without seeking to obtain a degree. He evinced no desire to take part in theological preparations for the Scotch Presbytery. After quitting Glasgow the young student turned his attention to the study of the law, at the same time that he engaged in many private and personally selected studies. Three years later, in 1835, he was elected a member of the Hon. Society of "Lincoln's Inn." In the following year, after spending some time in visits to France and Scotland, he returned to Old Basford, whither his father had now retired, and devoted himself with unflinching zeal to the composition of his chef-d'œuvre, the grand vindication of human life and immortality in the person of "Festus." Animated by the spirit of a more liberal religious theory in regard to a doctrine like ultimate and universal salvation, whether in regard to men or angels, as treated of by Klopstock and others, and inspired by like themes of eternal interest to mankind, the poet traces in "Festus" the history of a soul richly endowed with spiritual possibilities, but

exposed to sore trials and temptations, from which he emerges victorious into the faith of a larger creed, and is able to exclaim:

"I am an omnist, and believe in all
Religions—fragments of one golden world
Yet to be re-lit in its place in heaven—
For all are relatively true and false,
As evidence and earnest of the heart
To those who practice or have faith in them,
The absolutely true religion is
In heaven only, yea in Deity."

Nor does the existence of evil, and the eternal problem of suffering, shake his faith in the all-merciful power of the Creator, for he has the assurance that

"God surely lives!
Without God all things are in tunnel darkness.
Let there be God, and all are sun—all God]
And to the just soul in a future state,
Defect's dark mist, thick-spreading o'er this vale,
Shall dim the eye no more, nor bound survey;
And evil now, which boweth being down
As dew the grass, shall only fit all life
For fresher growth, and for intenser day,
Where God shall dry all tears, as the sun dew."

The whole aim of "Festus," as indeed of the author's own life, has been, as he himself expresses it, "to have done his best to favour a simple creed, which comprises in its consecrated elements a belief in the benignant providence of God, in the immortality of the soul, in the harmonized gospel of faith and reason combined, and in the just, discriminative judgment of the spirit after death by Deity."

The simplicity of his creed of life, not influenced by dread of punishment hereafter, or fear of the consequences, but by the inherent attraction of goodness for its own sake, is summed up in "Festus"—

"It would be well I think to live as though
No more were to be looked for; to be good
Because it is best here; and leave hope and fear
For lives below ourselves. If earth persuades not
That I owe prayer and praise and love, to God;
While all I have, He gives,—will heaven? will Hell?
"No; neither, never!"

He will not admit that Nature—the laws of God regulating human life, are ever at fault, but rather insists that the distorted lives men lead are alone blameworthy:

"Nature does

Never wrong: it is society which sins.

Look at the bee upon the wing among flowers;

How brave, how bright his life. Then mark him bived,

Cramped, cringing, in his self-built, social cell.

Thus is it in the world-hive; most where men

Lie deep in cities as in drifts, death drifts;

Nosing each other like a flock of sheep;

Not knowing, and not caring whence nor whither

They come or go, so that they fool together."

A year after the publication of "*Festus*," in 1840, he was called to the bar, but never practiced. Although the fame of "*Festus*" eclipsed all his later works, Philip James Bailey is also the author of a satire on the miscellaneous characteristics of the current period, named "*The Age*," not published till 1858. Three years later, in 1861, his remarkable treatise on "*The International Policy of the Great Powers*" was published by Messrs. Saunders, Otley and Co., in which the author skilfully elucidates the real policy of Germany, Austria, Prussia, France, Russia and Great Britain. This little sketch is written in a most concise and lucid style. The author's breadth of mind and comprehensive grasp of the situation, with its many complicated bearings, helps to throw light on many a diplomatic problem. In politics Philip James Bailey avoids ranging himself on the side of the Liberal party, for the reason, he states, that "*Liberalism is a principle too vague to supply a distinct policy, except at the expense of its own constituency.*" Yet he does not shrink from condemning the aggressive policy of England when conducive to war, which he considers to be "*the inevitable result of vicious and selfish policy.*"

In his brief survey of England's foreign policy, he lays marked stress on the fact that the English Press is invariably too ready to take the part of agitators in all parts of the world, except where England's own territorial interests are at stake. He concludes by asking, "*Might not a vast deal be said by sympathetic Poles in favour of reviving the extinct kingdom of Wales? Did not his late Majesty, King Edward, perpetrate unheard-of enormities in the reduction of that ancient and illustrious nation?*"

Prior to the publication of these two, he wrote "The Mystic," which appeared in 1885, but this work fell far short of the genius displayed by the author in "Festus," and indeed this poem stands apart by itself as superior to anything of its kind ever penned, either by its author or any other writer of this century. The rapidity with which it was composed—within the brief space of three years—adds to the wonder and admiration which readers of "Festus" experience. The poetical gems that are scattered so profusely throughout the entire work, are by no means confined to the field of theology. Human love inspires many of the most beautiful passages, and we have the poet telling us:

"'Tis love which mostly destines our life,
What makes the world in after life I know not,
For our horizon alters as we age:
Power only can make up for lack of love—
Power of some sort. The mind at one time grows
So fast, it fails; and then its stretch is more
Than its strength; but as it opes, love fills it up;
Like to the stamen in the flower of life,
Till for the time we well nigh grow all love;
And soon we feel the want of one kind heart
To love what's well, and to forgive what's ill
In us,—that love we play for, at all risks."

In common with many of the greatest writers, notably, Christopher Marlowe, Shakspeare, Thackeray, and others, Philip Bailey champions the faith in love at first sight, and in "Festus" he gives voice to this belief:

"Thy love to me was perfect from the first
Even as the rainbow in its native skies;
It did not grow, let meaner things mature.
The rainbow dies in heaven, and not on earth,
But love can never die; from world to world,
Up the high wheel of heaven, it lives for aye.
Life is the brief disunion of that nature
Which hath been one and same in heaven ere now,
And shall be yet again, renewed by death."

But whether love, life or death are his theme, Bailey's own masterful genius dominates and illumines them all. In a most exquisite passage touching on early death, he glorifies the fate of those who die young, concluding with the following beautiful metaphor:

"There is a firefly in the southern clime
Which shineth only when upon the wing ;
So is it with the mind : when once we rest
We darken. On ! said God unto the soul
As to the earth, for ever. On it goes
A rejoicing native of the infinite—
As is a bird of air—an orb of heaven.

Death is another life. We bow our heads
At going out, we think, and enter straight
Another golden chamber of the king's,
'Larger than this we leave, and lovelier."

Even the "Beauties of Festus," with descriptive index, though carefully compiled and published in 1884, fails to convey any adequate idea of the marvellous beauty and power of the poem. In the luxuriance of the descriptive passages, the reader is reminded of the poetical imagery of Shelley's writings, but how great is the contrast between these two master minds, both in their aims and conclusions. While Shelley chants the pæan of materialism, and admits no life beyond the grave, deeming that happiness lies in this life only, and should be the chief aim of humanity ; Bailey, on the other hand, tells us that "this life," this world is not enough for us ; they are nothing to the measure of our mind. For place we must have space, for time we must have eternity, and for a spirit godhood :

"From life to death—from death to life
We hurry round to God,
And leave behind us nothing but
The path that we have trod."

Unlike the generality of metaphorical and psychological poems, "Festus" solves the ethical problems which others are content to suggest. In 1864 the poet seems to have finally retired from an active literary life, as, with the exception of "The Universal Hymn," published in 1867, he has not contributed to the literary world. He spent the greater part of the twelve years, from 1864 to 1876, in Jersey, leaving his retreat from time to time to visit Switzerland, France and Italy. He was in France when the Franco-German war broke out, and at the time of the great eruption of Vesuvius, in 1872, he was present. After returning from Italy, he lived some years near Ifracombe, but left there in 1885, and then resided at Blackheath ; he afterwards settled at Nottingham. And here, at the ad-

vanced age of eighty-one, the great poet rests from his labours, surrounded by relatives and the early friends of his boyhood, himself the most striking exemplification of his own declaration :

" He most lives

Who thinks the most—feels the noblest—acts the best.

Life's but a means unto an end—that end,

Beginning, mean, and end to all things—God."

Juanita.

By CHARLOTTE A. PRICE.

Author of "SIR HARRY GREY," "MORS ET VITA," etc.

CHAPTER I.

" Could aught be sweet again, or aught be fair,

Or near, or dear to me, who had lost all.

Made life worth living ? "

HERBERT E. CLARKE.

It was June, the month of roses. A pleasant breeze stirred the leaves of the fine old elms under which Juanita Tregarth sat absorbed in thought. Her hat had fallen off, and the lovely masses of her rich auburn hair caught the rays of the setting sun and shone like a golden aureole round her head. Her large, dark eyes gazed intently across the sunny lawn and green fields towards the distant chain of hills that bounded the horizon ; but she was unconscious of the view, for her mind was busy with the day-dreams of a girl's first love : and one face rose before her mental vision which seemed to blot out all other objects.

Juanita, as her name betokened, had Spanish blood in her veins. Captain Tregarth, having contracted while young the love of a wandering life, left the army on the death of his father and spent most of his time abroad. When staying in Madrid he met a young Spanish girl, the only child of Señora de Peres, whose beauty and sweet disposition so completely enthralled him, that, after a short and ardent wooing, he won her for his bride. One brief year of

married happiness followed, and then Captain Tregarth was left alone, a broken-hearted man, with a tiny babe depending upon his love and care.

Little Juanita would have fared badly if her father had been her only protector. He was too much absorbed in grief to notice his child. The servants proved idle and careless, and the young couple had led too secluded a life, wrapped up in themselves and their own happiness, to make many friends. But, fortunately, an old nurse of Mrs. Tregarth's had followed the young bride to her new home, and as she had worshipped its mother so she adored the infant. She lavished the utmost care and tenderness upon the helpless babe, and it grew and flourished well in such capable hands.

Soon after the death of his wife the spirit of restlessness broke out afresh in Captain Tregarth, and he determined to join an expedition organised to explore some of the ruined cities of the East. But, alas! for the futility of all human plans! The devastating hand of fever stretched itself over the city of Madrid, and Captain Tregarth was one of the first victims to succumb to its power. He lived just long enough to settle his worldly affairs and confide his little daughter to the care of a married sister in England, and then he passed away, content to say farewell to a world which had become void of love and interest to him since the death of his beloved companion.

In due time Juanita and her nurse arrived safely in England; and as Mrs. Cardew had no family, the little orphan was all the more tenderly welcomed. She and her husband took Juanita to their hearts at once; the child never felt the loss of her own parents. Each want was supplied as soon as expressed; and as the years flew past the pretty child grew into a tall, slender and lovely maiden.

The hall-door of Oakleigh Manor always stood open in summer time, hospitality being widely practised within the spacious rooms of that luxurious house. Sounds of laughter and cheerful voices roused Juanita from her reverie, and she became aware that afternoon tea was in full progress, at which her presence would be expected. She was disinclined to leave the fresh air and fragrant flowers for the confined atmosphere of a room. One of her marked characteristics—doubtless inherited from her Spanish mother—being the love of an outdoor life.

But as she lingered, there came a lull in the chatter of her aunt's guests, and the strains of a sweet tenor voice fell upon her ears: a

voice that was quickly becoming all too dear to Juanita, and which drew her loitering footsteps towards the house. A group of men and women were gathered round their charming hostess, enjoying the present hour apparently without a care, while they sipped "the cup that cheers but not inebriates"; their flirtations, talking and laughter momentarily hushed by the spell cast over them in the singer's voice.

Captain Ferrars was a man of distinguished appearance, slenderly made and tall of stature. His features were clean cut and expressive; the nose Grecian; the rather full lips half hidden by a long, silky moustache; while thick waves of curling reddish-brown hair covered a well-shaped head. An air of dignity marked his actions; and when he ceased singing and turned to greet Juanita, it became evident that his attractions were further increased by a pair of hazel eyes, having that pathetic look in their clear depths which we so often see in those of a faithful dog.

Although her acquaintance with Captain Ferrars had only lasted three days—during which time he had been staying at Oakleigh Manor—Juanita knew that nevermore would her heart be free.

"She loved him with that love that was her doom."

The strange inexplicable attraction that draws one soul to another had laid hold of the dreamy, imaginative girl, and she became entangled in love's meshes without a struggle. That she knew very little of Captain Ferrars' antecedents gave her no concern; she felt, through all the fibres of her being, that he was the one man on God's earth for her. Mr. Cardew's voice broke the spell that bound her.

"Come here, Nita," said he, "and give me an account of yourself; you must not play truant like this."

"Oh, it is so lovely out of doors, dear uncle; I cannot stay in the house a minute longer than I am obliged," replied the girl, as she accepted the cup of tea that Captain Ferrars handed to her and chose one of her favourite cakes.

"Well, we will have tea on the lawn to-morrow under your shady trees," said Mrs. Cardew; "and now sing to us, dear child; Captain Ferrars has enchanted us with his voice, and you have missed a great treat."

"Will you try this duet with me, Miss Tregarth?" asked Captain

Ferrars, as he selected a sheet of music from the pile that lay upon the piano and held it towards her.

Juanita smiled acquiescence, and walked across the room to the piano with the graceful dignity that accompanied all her actions. She had a sweet, but not powerful, soprano, and the two voices blended admirably, the sad pathetic words of the song being heard distinctly through the room. From that day Captain Ferrars and Juanita often sang together. Both were passionately fond of music, and the evenings seemed shorn of half their pleasure to Mr. and Mrs. Cardew if these two voices were silent.

Among the guests staying at Oakleigh Manor during these bright June days was a schoolfellow of Juanita's.

Her father, Mr. Harmer, having amassed a large fortune in Australia by sheep farming, returned to spend the remainder of his life in "the old country." Laura was his darling and only child; he could deny her nothing, but the indulgence lavished upon her had, unfortunately, fostered a selfish and domineering character. In warm countries girls develop quickly, and Laura was introduced into society at Sydney when only sixteen. But Mrs. Harmer, finding her daughter's education very deficient, by dint of persuasion and entreaties induced her on their arrival in England to go to school for a year.

While under the care of the excellent Miss Roberts the two girls became acquainted. The attraction between them was, probably, the total dissimilarity of their tastes and dispositions; for if there is any truth in the saying that "opposite characters suit each other best in marriage," there is no doubt that friendship's bonds are more frequently formed and firmly cemented by contrasts than by affinities—the one nature supplying what the other lacks and feels the need of obtaining.

An intense love of admiration was Laura Harmer's greatest fault. She could not endure to see another preferred before herself; and though, as yet, she was not aware of it Captain Ferrars had begun to take a prominent place in her thoughts. His good looks, gentlemanly bearing and beautiful voice had made a great impression upon her mind. To see his attentions, therefore, bestowed upon Juanita roused the demon of jealousy in Laura's heart; and, never having been denied anything which she wished to obtain, she determined that no one should come between her and the handsome young officer.

CHAPTER II.

"Doubt, a blank twilight of the heart, which mars
All sweetest colours in its dimness same;
A soul mist, thro' whose rifts familiar stars,
Beholding, we misname."

"We must work diligently to-day," said Mrs. Cardew, as she took her place at the breakfast table the following morning; "no laziness will be allowed, so after I have arranged my domestic affairs let us meet together for rehearsal."

"All right," assented her nephew, Harry Grant. "We will hurry up and do our best to shine as stars in the firmament of Newcombe."

"I think we know our parts, Miss Tregarth," said Captain Ferrars, turning to Juanita; "but, of course, we must obey orders from headquarters."

Juanita was looking pale, for her sleep had been disturbed by restless dreams. Had a presentiment of evil reached her? Nevertheless, she gave a smiling assent to Launcelot's remark, and rising from the table walked to the open window. But when Laura Harmer saw that Captain Ferrars was following Juanita, she twined her arm affectionately in that of her friend, and drew her steps across the lawn to the seat under the elms.

A large fire had lately raged in Newcombe, the nearest town to Oakfield Manor, at which one of the firemen received such severe injuries, whilst endeavouring to rescue the inmates from one of the burning houses, that he succumbed shortly after. Mr. and Mrs. Cardew, with the assistance of the officers at Newcombe barracks, had arranged some theatricals for the benefit of the poor man's widow, who was left totally destitute with an expected increase to an already large family.

To pose artistically was one of Miss Harmer's ambitions, and her abundant fair hair, blue eyes and general adaptability lent themselves favourably to critical situations. But to "weep with those who weep" and truly to sympathise with pain and distress was, in reality, perfectly foreign to her nature, though she could simulate and act a part passing well. It was this hypocritical pretence that had deluded Juanita Tregarth into making a friend of her.

But we walk the paths of life with a veil over our eyes that is often, alas ! only lifted when too late !

Having defeated Launcelot's wish to follow Juanita, Laura considered it a favourable moment for the furtherance of her own designs. She also thought she could ascertain something of the feelings that lay hidden beneath Juanita's calm exterior and cautiously shaped her questions.

"Do you really care for this stupid play, Nita?" she asked, with a yawn. "I think it a very silly production, and am glad I have not been asked to take a prominent part in it."

"I dislike the publicity," replied Juanita, "and only consented to act because my aunt wished me to do so. I wanted to help the poor widow, though I could do so without all this display."

"I will willingly take your place if you wish to escape the ordeal," said Laura, seeing a chance not to be neglected of being in close proximity with Captain Ferrars. "I could soon learn the part, a few hours' study would enable me to master it."

Now Juanita had lately guessed that in spite of her protestations to the contrary, Laura longed to be cast for the heroine in the contemplated entertainment.

Being totally free from any suspicion of Miss Harmer's *penchant* for Captain Ferrars, the kind-hearted girl thought she could please her friend and be relieved of a not very agreeable rôle by relinquishing her part in the theatricals.

It was true that Juanita regretted the disappointment she intuitively divined Launcelot Ferrars would experience; but acting in public was not to her taste, and therefore she decided to accept Laura's offer, if Mrs. Cardew did not object.

Her aunt was, at first, much annoyed at Juanita's determination. However, she soon conquered the chagrin she felt. But when Captain Ferrars was told of the proposed change, Laura saw, by the look that passed over his face, how small was her chance of winning his affections.

"What will Miss Masters say when she hears that you have shirked your part just at the last?" he asked, when they were alone, casting a look of reproach at Juanita. "I think the chief pleasure she felt in writing the play was that you would so well personate the heroine."

"Oh, Laura will make a far better *Gertrude* than I should have

done," replied Juanita. "Her hair and complexion are fair, and she will not be troubled with stage-fright; whereas I cannot bear the thought of confronting all those up-turned faces in the town-hall of Newcombe on Tuesday evening."

"It is not necessary to describe the theatricals. They passed off with *éclat*. The seats were well-filled on the momentous night, and Laura appeared to advantage, but she knew that she was as far as ever from shaking the allegiance of Captain Ferrars to her friend.

A little coolness had sprung up between him and Juanita, on the day she refused to take part in the play. But far from desiring the society of Miss Harmer, Captain Ferrars disliked and distrusted her. He was conscious that she contrived to give an air of intimacy to their conversation which did not exist, for it was, in reality, purely trivial. She, also, deferred to his opinion on most subjects, managed to be his partner at tennis, and claimed his attention whenever an opportunity occurred.

In vain Launcelot tried to detach himself from the web this scheming girl so skilfully wove. It grew stronger day by day, and he felt, to his infinite rage and disgust, that, sometimes, his own action furthered her designs. But Laura's plans were so carefully laid, that without being rude and ungentlemanly, he could not always escape from her blandishments.

Juanita watched this constant companionship, and doubts of Launcelot's truth arose in her mind. She became cold and distant towards him, fearing that she had given her love to one who did not value it. The poor girl's heart grew heavy, although she hid its sadness under an apparently cheerful manner.

"What a handsome man Captain Ferrars is," said Laura, as the two girls were exchanging confidences in the solitude of the midnight hour. "I wonder if he has private means, for though I like him very much, and his attentions are quite marked, as you must see, dear, I am sure my father would never let me marry a man without a fortune, especially an officer in an infantry regiment."

Poor Juanita winced at this speech, but, though Laura scanned her features closely, she did not detect any change in their expression.

"I expect your father would not oppose your choice if he knew your happiness was concerned in it," answered Juanita quietly. "Captain Ferrars comes of a good Irish family, and though his fortune is but small now, he has expectations."

"I really thought he was *épris* with you at first," returned Laura, "but it would never do for you to set your affections in that quarter. Mr. Cardew has evidently made up his mind that George Bell shall be your future husband."

"Ah, poor uncle," sighed Juanita, "his hopes then are doomed to disappointment, for I shall never marry George."

"No doubt it would be a very suitable match," said Miss Harmer, "and I can understand Mr. Cardew desiring it. But surely you, Nita, could never be induced to settle down with that thick-pated, though well-intentioned young man, who seems to live for nothing but hunting, shooting and sports of all kinds."

"Oh," replied Juanita, laughing, "George is not quite so stupid as you think. Ashfield is only three miles away, and we have been friends from childhood. I know young Bell has a kind heart and most generous nature, and I like him very much, but my uncle and George, too, are both aware that I have no intention of becoming Mrs. Bell."

"By that reply," said Laura, "I can surely conclude that he has already asked you to be his wife; and, as you think so highly of him, no doubt a little perseverance on his part will win you in the end."

"No," said Juanita, "I shall never marry George Bell. But I am too tired for any more gossip, it is getting late;" and rising from the low seat she had occupied, she kissed her friend and retired to her own room.

Yes, she was tired and sad and sorely troubled, but sleep fled away from her eyes that night. He is a coy visitant, and often withdraws his presence when its comfort is most needed. Ruthlessly Juanita tossed from side to side, till the grey dawn of early morning stole in at her open window, and the sweet notes of a thrush made melody through the silent air.

Various scenes from the past week rose before her eyes during those quiet, sleepless hours. Being of a loyal and trustful nature, she never, for a moment, suspected Laura of treachery. The sting of the sorrow that overwhelmed the poor girl lay in the fear that her heart had passed out of her own keeping, and that the love she felt for Captain Ferrars was neither valued nor returned.

And yet, was it not on her, she asked, that his looks were fixed, when, at the request of Mr. Cardew (who liked the quaint old ballad) Launcelot sang, in his enchanting tenor voice:—

"Soft o'er the fountain, ling'ring falls the Southern moon:
 Far o'er the mountain, breaks the day too soon!
 In thy dark eyes' splendour, where the warm light loves to dwell,
 Weary looks, yet tender, speak their fond farewell!
 Nita! Juanita! ask thy soul if we should part?
 Nita! Juanita! lean thou on my heart.

"When in thy dreaming, moons like these shall shine again,
 And daylight beaming, prove thy dreams are vain;
 Wilt thou not relenting, for thine absent lover sigh?
 In thy heart consenting to a prayer gone by.
 Nita! Juanita! let me linger by thy side!
 Nita! Juanita! be my own fair bride!"

"But what if it be true," pondered Juanita, "that Captain Ferrars is in love with Laura, as she thinks, and has never given a serious thought to me." At this idea, the warm southern blood that ran in her veins flamed with indignation, for she knew that he had misled her by his obvious admiration before the theatricals.

Before the theatricals!—Ah, there lay her mistake! A flash of light illumined the past, and showed in a moment her foolishness in yielding to Laura's suggestion. She had exposed Launcelot to the charms not only of a beautiful woman, but to one who was, also, an heiress.

"Doubtless he thinks I do not care for him!" cried the unhappy girl, as she recollected his look of reproach.

CHAPTER III.

"For us to love!

Oh! is it not taking sorrow to our hearts,
 Binding her there?"

"Why must our souls thus love and then be riven?"

MRS. HEMANS.

AFTER spending a week at Oakleigh Manor, Captain Ferrars returned to Newcombe barracks. Had Juanita but known it, he, too, felt sad and perplexed, for he loved her devotedly, and entertained no feelings for Miss Harmer but those of contempt and dislike. He was a man of the world, but the soul of honour, and quickly saw through Laura's schemes to ensnare him and separate him from her friend.

Far from being of a sordid mind, Captain Ferrars would never marry a woman unless he could give her his entire love and respect, and raise her to that pedestal in his thoughts, on which every man, who is worthy of the name, always enthrones the woman he desires to make his wife. If a favourable opportunity had occurred, it is possible he might have spoken to Juanita during his visit, but her sudden coldness and the way in which Miss Harmer contrived to hamper his actions, induced him to keep silence.

But the most important reason of all was his present pecuniary position. He knew that Juanita was the idol of her uncle and aunt, and would, probably, inherit their property. Then, was it likely, however good his future prospects might be, that Mr. Cardew would allow his niece to marry a man whose income, at the very outside, now only amounted to five hundred a year?

Waiting for dead men's shoes is sorry work, and though Launcelot Ferrars was the next heir to an old and wealthy relative, he could not build any hopes of acceptance on such a slight foundation. His kinsman held no intercourse whatever with the young officer, and would do nothing to advance his interests. Old and miserly, he preferred the complete isolation in which he lived, to the joy that warms the heart when it indulges in the exercise of benevolent actions.

And so Captain Ferrars kept silence. He hoped that when Laura Harmer returned home, Juanita would resume her usual friendly manner. Then he determined to tell her how dear she really was to him, and ask her to decide his fate.

A few more weeks of delightful summer weather sped away all too quickly. Meantime Captain Ferrars came often to Oakleigh Manor, for he was a great favourite there.

"I have some bad news for you," said Mr. Cardew, looking across the luncheon table to his wife one day in the beginning of September. "I met Colonel Trevor in Newcombe, and he told me that orders came down from the War Office, this morning, for young Ferrars to leave the *dépôt*, and join his regiment at Gibraltar."

"I am very sorry to hear it," replied Mrs. Cardew. "I have always liked Captain Ferrars best of all the officers quartered at Newcombe. We shall miss him very much, and his singing, too, for he has a lovely voice, besides being first rate at tennis."

"From Gibraltar he will go to India," said Mr. Cardew, "so it will be 'good-bye' for some years, I suppose."

"I wonder what Laura Harmer will think of it. She seems very much taken with him, though it looks as if the love was all on her side."

"Young minx," laughed her husband, "she flirts with all the men in turn."

"Yes, and has no love for anyone but herself," said Mrs. Cardew, who had more penetration than her husband.

"Where is Juanita?" he asked. "I miss the child's sweet face. It never seems right unless I get a kiss from her when I come home."

"She and Laura are always so unpunctual that I urged them to go and dress early. I suppose you have forgotten, as usual, that we are due at the Bells' garden party this afternoon."

"Ah, true, so we are," answered Mr Cardew, "it had quite slipped my memory." At which his wife laughed, for she knew him to be utterly incorrigible in forgetting his social engagements, although in matters of business no one could exceed his punctuality.

Amid the hurry of starting to the Bells', Mrs. Cardew forgot the sudden departure of Captain Ferrars, and did not mention it to her niece until they were alighting from the carriage. She failed, therefore, to see the pallor that overspread Juanita's face. But Laura, always on the watch, cast a quick glance at her, and saw enough to confirm the suspicions she had previously entertained, that Juanita was anything but indifferent to Launcelot Ferrars.

Fortunately, Juanita was endowed with a great gift of self-control, and she quickly recovered her composure, but the light of day was overcast and the weary sinking of her heart told its own tale.

From among the guests she saw the tall form she loved so well, emerge and come towards her across the green turf. Spontaneously their hands met in a firm clasp. Distrust and doubt fled away for the moment as they gazed into each other's eyes, and the anguish of parting rent the veil asunder that hid their mutual love.

"You have heard of my sudden recall, Miss Tregarth?" said he. "It was quite unexpected, and has upset all my plans."

"Yes, my uncle heard the news in Newcombe this morning. I am sure we shall miss you very much."

"Think of me sometimes when I am in India. You will be always in my thoughts; I shall never forget the happy days that I have spent at Oakleigh Manor," said Ferrars, looking at her with his

faithful brown eyes. "Dog's eyes," as Laura Harmer contemptuously called them one day.

"Must you go?" asked Juanita, softly, and with crimson cheeks.

"I fear there is no help for it," he answered despondently.

"Those tribes on the frontier are getting so troublesome, we may expect a war before long."

"When do you start?" asked Juanita.

"This is Tuesday, and I leave Newcombe in three days. I have only a week in which to get ready before I embark. I will come to-morrow and say farewell. Will you give me a chance to explain some things that may be puzzling you, dearest Juanita?"

Her name slipped from his lips inadvertently, as he felt the longing to comfort and cheer her. These few sentences had been exchanged while they sauntered down a shady path in the lovely grounds of Oakfield, but as they suddenly turned a corner, they came upon a group of people with young Bell in the centre, and all privacy was at an end.

Juanita bore up bravely during the long hours that elapsed before she found herself alone at night; then worn out and exhausted, she gave way to grief. A burst of weeping somewhat relieved her over-charged heart.

One bright hope shone through the darkness—"I shall see him to-morrow," she said; and soothed by this thought, Juanita, at last, fell asleep.

Mr. and Mrs. Cardew were quite unaware of Juanita's love for Launcelot Ferrars. They cherished the hope that she would be the wife of George Bell, whose estate adjoined Oakfield Manor. By this arrangement they would not lose the society of their niece, who had become like a daughter to them, and the united properties would make one of the finest in the county. At the same time they would never have wished her to marry a man she did not love. Juanita and George had grown up together in close intercourse as near neighbours, and the friendship that existed between the young people blinded her uncle and aunt to the true state of affairs. George, poor fellow, desired nothing better than to make Juanita his wife. But he knew her heart had gone forth to another, for love is a great quickener of the perceptions.

The following afternoon was one of the most beautiful of this glorious summer:—

"We will have tea under the elms," said Mrs. Cardew, looking at Juanita. "You are pale to-day, my child; the heat tries you, and yet you ought not to be overcome by it, when sunny Spain was the land of your birth."

"I am quite well, dear aunt, and revel in the warmth, this lovely blue sky and balmy air. My mother's country could not be more beautiful than old England is in my eyes."

"Do you think you would like India?" whispered Laura with a slight sneer. "Perhaps Launcelot Ferrars will ask you to go to the gorgeous East some day. I wonder what your aunt would say to that proposal."

A crimson blush rose on Juanita's fair cheeks, and she turned hastily away and began to busy herself with the cups and saucers. The comfortable basket-chairs soon found occupants, and the tennis-players, having finished their game, gladly partook of the various refreshments provided for them. In vain Captain Ferrars tried to speak a few words with Juanita alone. She was such a favourite that she was surrounded all the afternoon by a small crowd of admirers. At length an opportunity seemed to occur, and they passed together through the open window and entered the morning-room. But Laura Harmer saw the movement and followed them, crying, "Oh, Captain Ferrars, sing one more song before you go;" and then he knew he had lost his chance, and had no alternative but to comply with her request.

Breathing something like an imprecation on this meddlesome girl, he bent over Juanita and whispered—but not so low as to be unheard by Miss Harmer—"I will write to you to-night."

Shortly afterwards he took leave of Mr. and Mrs. Cardew. Then taking the hand of Juanita between his own, he pressed it warmly, and gazing into her eyes with a passionate look of love, bade her farewell.

CHAPTER IV.

"I shall remember while the light lives yet,
And in the darkness I shall not forget."

JUANITA passed a restless night, and only fell asleep with the dawn. Rising early, she flung on a dressing-gown and ran downstairs to

her uncle's study, where the key of the letter bag was always kept. She quickly found it, and going to the hall, unlocked the bag, and spread out its contents hastily upon the table. Alas! there was no letter for her!

She turned them over and over with eager, trembling hands, but could not find the one she sought. It was not there. Cold and stricken to the heart she regained her room, but no tears came to relieve the pain that overwhelmed her. All the old fears returned with double force. Her soul was agonised by doubts; then gradually, a ray of hope returned as she thought "He may not have had time to write last evening;" or, "Perhaps, he may find an opportunity of coming to see me once more."

She hung about the grounds all day without avail, and in the evening walked up the hill behind the house, from whence a view of Newcombe barracks could be obtained. As she stood gazing across the lonely valley, the sound of the bugle floated to her ears from the distant hill. But Captain Ferrars neither came nor wrote.

The following day, her uncle remarked, "Well, the officers and men of the 102nd left Newcombe this morning, and they embark for India on Wednesday. I wonder what the next lot will be like."

"I am not fond of changes," said Mrs. Cardew.

"Neither am I," echoed Juanita.

There were yet three days in which she might receive the promised letter.

"I will wait," she said. "Well waited is well done!" But those three days passed and still no letter came. He was not ill she knew, for her uncle had exchanged a few words with him in Newcombe.

Ah! then he must be false indeed!

Laura Harmer left Oakleigh Manor the day after Launcelot's last visit there. She and Juanita never met again. In the following October the heiress married a rising young barrister. Her letters came with less frequency and at longer intervals, and then ceased altogether. Nothing was heard of her for some years.

As the weeks and months dragged slowly on, Juanita's step grew listless, and the rose tints left her cheeks. Her pillow was often wet with tears at night, and as they fell she seemed to hear the sweet voice of Ferrars as he sang in the gloaming. Mr. and Mrs. Cardew watched the failure of Juanita's health with great concern.

Everything that love or money could procure was showered upon her. They consulted eminent doctors, who always gave the same advice. "Change of scene and freedom from anxiety."

"Anxiety! What can our petted darling know of that dread foe?" cried Mrs. Cardew. "She has not a single care."

Sir William Green looked, as usual, imperturbable, but repeated his instructions, muttering something about "inherited delicacy"—"feeble action of the heart," etc. All of which conveyed no meaning to Mrs. Cardew, who was the embodiment of health and strength.

In the autumn they went to Scotland, where the pure air revived Juanita's spirits, and she became, apparently, much the same girl that she had always been. Her laugh, perhaps, was not quite so joyous, nor her step as buoyant as a few months before, and a sudden faintness which occasionally came on after over-exertion caused uneasiness to those around, but as it quickly passed away, and seemed to leave no ill-effects behind, nothing serious was thought of it.

"How I wish Juanita would listen to George and return his affection," said Mrs. Cardew, one day, shortly after their return home. "He's a good, steady fellow, and would make an excellent husband."

"She is but young," answered Mr. Cardew. "Let her alone, she will marry him all in good time."

For this worthy couple had not given up their plan, although there did not seem to be the slightest grain of hope on which to rest for its fulfilment.

George Bell came and went as of yore, and Juanita was glad to see him; but he knew he did not make any progress in winning her affections. When he approached the subject nearest his heart, she always laughed it off with some ready jest, or skilfully parried his appeals. And so the years passed slowly away.

It was again the month of June, and Juanita sat beneath the elms as of old. She looked pale and fragile. On her left hand shone a brilliant circle of diamonds, and as she idly turned the ring from side to side, little sparkles of light and colour flashed from the glittering gems, a weary sigh escaped her lips, and her sweet eyes filled with tears.

"And so it is George, after all, who will be my husband," she murmured. "I pray I may never see Launcelot Ferrars again."

Yes, the wish of the Cardews had been realised, and the patient love of George Bell rewarded. Juanita was his promised bride. No letter had ever come from Captain Ferrars, nor had anything been heard of him after he sailed for India.

Men, as a rule, are not good letter writers, and seldom keep up a correspondence.

In the busy world of society, too, the absent are soon forgotten, and so Juanita heard no tidings of her faithless lover, and, in a short time, his name ceased to be mentioned. The sharpness of the suffering she endured, began, after a while, to subside, and a dull, apathetic indifference took its place. But the remembrance of those few weeks never passed away. The memory of their joy and bitterness lay hidden in the secret chambers of her soul.

Launcelot had, one day in the "long ago," given Juanita a rose, and she kept it still. Its tints and fragrance had then been beautiful, and her hopes, too, had at that time been tinged with the glory of love. Now, the rose, and her dreams of happiness, were both alike, withered and dead. The faithful devotion of George Bell had, at last, touched Juanita's heart; especially when she contrasted his fidelity with the heartless conduct of Captain Ferrars. She began to see how much pleasure she could give her uncle and aunt by this marriage, and so she consented to become George's wife. Her attachment to young Bell being at least sincere, if not passionate. The wedding was fixed to take place in September. Sitting quietly under the elms, Juanita's thoughts fled back to that day in June, three years ago, when she had been loth to leave their grateful shade and mix with her aunt's guests. Was her unwillingness a premonition of future suffering, she wondered?

As she thus communed, wrapped in oblivion, she found Graves, the old butler, standing beside her, holding a salver, on which lay a card. She took it up mechanically, but at the sight of the name it bore, an electric shock passed through her frame. The name was that of Sir Launcelot Ferrars, who was even now coming to meet her.

Indignation lent her courage. Rising, she drew up her slight figure with an air of pride, and asked, "To what am I indebted for the honour of this visit?"

Eagerly he seized her hand, and cried, "Ah, Juanita, my darling! do not judge me hardly. We were deceived and separated by your

false friend, Miss Harmer. She has written and confessed the deception she practised on us, dear one. See, here is her letter, and the one I wrote to you, which she abstracted from the letter bag the morning it arrived at your house."

Gently he drew Juanita down on the seat and placed himself beside her, for he saw a pallor as of death spread over her face, and her trembling limbs refused their office.

With a gesture of repugnance she took up the envelope that bore the handwriting of her false and ungrateful friend. Inside she found two letters, one from Laura addressed to Sir Launcelot Ferrars. The other, with the seal still unbroken, was in the handwriting of her lover.

"Read it, Juanita," he cried, "and exonerate me from all blame."

She broke the seal and read the ardent words of love that, had they come at the rightful time, would have made Juanita a happy woman, but now they only increased the anguish and grief that she suffered.

"Too late, too late," moaned the poor girl. "Nothing can repair the fearful wrong she has done us!"

"Ah, do not say so; this pain will pass, and we shall yet be happy," said Ferrars, all unknowing of the tie that bound her.

But Juanita held her hand towards him with its shining gems, and fixing her sad eyes upon his, said, "I am George Bell's affianced wife."

The shock was great, but Ferrars, undaunted, begged her to tell George all the circumstances, and ask him to set her free.

He pleaded well, for he loved her passionately. But Juanita sat stricken and despairing. If she yielded to his persuasions what sorrow would fall upon poor George; and how great would be the disappointment of her kind uncle and aunt. On the other hand her heart spoke wildly in Launcelot's favour, and her own too. For at the sight of his face and the sound of his voice she felt her love return in all its old force. She knew and realised that it was Launcelot Ferrars she loved still and him only.

He listened patiently and with tenderness to all she said, but he could extract no promise that she would be his wife.

"Oh, Nita! you do not love me or you would not cast me off," he exclaimed, in his misery.

She turned towards him and murmured: "I *have* loved you, I *do* love you, and I shall *always* love you."

At these words Captain Ferrars took her in his arms and rained kisses on her mouth, her hair and her hands. Juanita drew herself slowly away, and looking once again in his face, cried with tears: "Farewell! Farewell! my beloved!"

"Oh, grant me one more interview," he said, entreatingly, hoping still to move her from the decision she had taken.

Loving him as she did, was it to be wondered that Juanita agreed?

"To part is like death, Launcelot," she said. "My uncle and aunt are away on a visit for a few days, and George is also absent. I will see you once more. Come to-morrow at this hour. I shall be here under these trees to meet you."

Lingeringly they parted—with clasped hands, and gazing into each other's faces as though they would imprint the well-loved features on their memories for ever. The next day Captain Ferrars, full of eagerness and hope, kept his tryst at the appointed hour.

Entering the grounds of Oakleigh Manor he walked towards the grand old elms. But Juanita was not there.

He crossed the velvet turf and looked in at the open window of the morning-room, one of her favourite resorts.

Juanita sat in the low chair she usually occupied. Her back was turned towards him, but Ferrars could see her white dress trailing on the floor.

"Nita, dearest!" he called softly. "I am here." But Juanita neither moved nor spoke.

He entered the room, and leaning down gazed intently into the calm white face.

"She is asleep," he said; "no wonder."

Sleepless nights make weary days, and of these Juanita had known many. He took her soft white hand, but it lay irresponsive in his loving clasp.

"Awake, awake, my darling," he cried. "Speak to me, Juanita." But no sound broke the silence.

Then something in the still and quiet form sent a ghastly thrill of apprehension through his heart. Torn with anguish he called her despairingly by every endearing name.

"Nita! Juanita!" he cried, aloud. "Come back, come back. Leave me not desolate and alone."

But the dead never come back.
His entreaties and his grief were alike unavailing. Juanita slept
well at last.

At rest she lay, unconscious of his tears,
She neither heard nor grieved ;
For all was o'er that had distressed her here,
All, too, that had deceived.

In calmness there she lay, no earthly voice
Would ever reach her more ;
— No loving words pierce through the mists that hide
The sight of that bright shore

Where she had entered on a life so blest,
Tranquil, serene and fair ;
We strive in vain to guess what were her thoughts
When she found entrance there.

Set free from this world—heaven before her spread—
What were her hopes and fears,
As the sweet notes of Seraph's music fell
On her enraptured ears ?

As the first glimpse of heaven's beauty met
Her awed, entranced sight,
And peace and bliss closed round her ravish'd soul,
Escaped from earth's dark night.

No voice comes back to tell ; all answering tones
Have with her spirit fled ;
And silence reigns, unbroken, quiet, deep,
The silence of the dead.

Johannes Brahms.

By SARAH CATHERINE BUDD,

Author of "HAYDN," "MOZART," etc., etc.,

ON April the 3rd, 1897, Johannes Brahms, one of the greatest musicians of his day, passed away at Vienna, at the age of sixty-four years.

As one great man after another vanishes from our sight, and his place knows him no more, we sorrowfully look round and ask, who is worthy to succeed him.

The world looks very blank and empty. Time sweeps away the great, with the little, and none can stay his hand. We must remember for our comfort, that out of the darkness fresh stars will arise, it has always been so in the world's history, and will be, to the end of time. It will be long, however, before Johannes Brahms can be replaced in the world of music, in which he was indeed a shining light.

Brahms was born at Hamburg on May 7th, 1833. His father was a double bass player, and gave him his first lessons in music. Later on, he took lessons of Edward Marxsen, of Altona. Unlike Mozart, he does not appear remarkable for any extraordinary musical talents in early life, in fact, he never really made his mark until he was twenty years of age. We hear of him, indeed, as playing a set of variations before a Hamburg audience, with much applause, but Marxsen, with great wisdom, after this, withdrew his talented pupil entirely from public life, and kept him to hard study. Towards the end of this educational period, Brahms devoted himself to composition with the greatest ardour. The fruits of this application include three pianoforte sonatas. The last of these—Op. 5 in F minor—is a very beautiful work.

It was at Göttingen in 1853, that Brahms' musical career may be said to have begun. He was to have played Beethoven's Kreutzer Sonata, with the extraordinary violinist Reményi, when to the intense disgust of Reményi, the pianoforte was found to be a semitone below pitch, and the fiddle would have to be tuned down. With the utmost coolness, Brahms came to the rescue, and suggested that he should play the pianoforte accompaniment in B flat, the original being A.

This he actually did without a book, and it was a task which only an extremely gifted musician could have accomplished.

Joachim who was present, in writing about this circumstance to a friend observed "Brahms has an altogether exceptional talent for composition, a gift that is enhanced by the unaffected modesty of his character. His playing too, gives every presage of a great artistic career, full of fire and energy, yet, if I may say so, unerring in its precision and certainty of touch. In brief, he is the most considerable musician of his age that I have ever met."

Robert Schumann also—a very keen and impartial critic—speaking of this says "Brahm's will prove a worthy successor to the great masters." Brahms, however, was so very retiring in his disposition, that he never cared to play in public, and made no great mark as a pianist. In 1854 he was asked to conduct at the Court of the Prince of Lippe Detmold, and thither he went for a short time. The duties, however, were uncongenial, and the air of a court never suited Johannes Brahms, therefore he soon went to Hamburg, his native town, and in 1862 finally settled at Vienna. By this time he had written much, but published little. In 1859 he published his first pianoforte concerto, in C minor, Op. 15, which was not appreciated. His next work was the exquisite orchestral serenade, which came into high favour. Occasionally, about this time he conducted concerts—notably at the Sing-Académie and the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde at Vienna, but in his heart he detested a public platform, the whole bent of his mind was for quiet study. Alone he was master of his thoughts and musical ideas flowed freely. He composed two masterly sextets, and pianoforte quartets, also the splendid pianoforte quintets in F minor, Op. 34.

In 1862 Brahms and Wagner met at Vienna, but the two masters never became friends. With so much in common between these two great minds one would have expected them to coalesce at once, but they never did, and it is one of the curious questions of life, these strange affinities, these unaccountable likes and dislikes, never to be really explained.

In 1866, Brahms went with Joachim for a concert tour in Switzerland, and two years after, he gave his German Requiem to the world. This work was intended as a tribute to the memory of those who perished in 1866 in the Austro-Prussian war. It is a masterpiece, and has made Johannes Brahms for ever famous.

In 1871 he gave to the world the "Song of Destiny," which for beauty may almost take rank by the side of the "Requiem," and in 1876 Brahms produced at Carlsruhe the First Symphony in C minor, which is exceedingly fine, if not the best of his symphonies; the next year, the Cambridge University Musical Society invited Brahms to England, in order to conduct his Symphony as well as to receive the degree of Mus. Doc.; this offer, however, he declined on account of his dislike to travel; some time after, he again received an invitation to visit this country, and is said to have replied, "you have my music, why do you want me?"

In 1877 the Symphony in D, No. 2 was introduced at the Philharmonic Concerts at Vienna, and a little later at the Crystal Palace. This exquisite melody quickly became a favourite. Several other beautiful symphonies followed, but as years sped on, it became apparent that his best work was done. He did not, however, become idle. Sets of songs for one or more voices, double concertos for violin and violoncello, the beautiful clarinet Quintet in B minor, and several lovely, though short pianoforte pieces, were all produced in the closing years of his life.

Brahms was middle-sized, strongly-built, with blue eyes and a very long beard—the very type of a North German. Last year there were signs of his serious illness, cancer of the liver beginning to appear. His face assumed a yellow hue, his strong frame looked shrunken, dark circles showed themselves under his eyes, and soon there came that dread look which, once seen, can never be forgotten. That look, which, when we are watching over a beloved one, makes our hearts die within us! On March the 7th, Brahms for the last time appeared at a concert. This was given by the Philharmonic Society in Vienna, and commenced with the 4th Symphony in E minor.

Brahms was at the back, but the great applause which his work evoked compelled him to come forward, and then the change from the strong man to the failing invalid could be plainly seen, and it touched every heart. The audience cheered loudly, but many had tears in their eyes, as they thought of his immortal gifts to music, and felt that they were taking leave of him for ever. Johannes Brahms knew this only too well, and tears slowly filled his eyes.

On the 25th of March he took to his bed, from which he was never more to rise. He had never been married, and for the last eleven

years he had been faithfully watched over by Frau Truxa, the widow of a journalist. She nursed him tenderly in his last illness, and was with him when he died. He was touchingly grateful for every attention, and *Ach Danke* were the last words he spoke. On Saturday morning, the 3rd of April, seeing Madame Truxa could not subdue her emotion, he took her hand, and with tears rolling down his cheeks, fell back on the pillow and died. He had scarcely any relatives, with the exception of a step-mother and step-sister at Hamburg, of whom he was very fond. An intimate friend tells us that he gave away fully two-thirds of his handsome income in secret charities. In common with many great men, he had a shrinking from the thought of death, and although he left a properly drawn-up will, it was never signed. In it—after providing for his friends at Hamburg—he had left 15,000 florins to Frau Truxa the rest with all his most valuable MSS. and books to the Vienna Society of the Friends of Music, of which he was a director.

The Royal Berlin Academy of Arts sent a telegram of condolence to Vienna, with a well merited laurel wreath and a dedication ribbon.

On Tuesday, the 6th of April, 1897, all that was mortal of Johannes Brahms was laid to rest in the musicians' corner of the central cemetery at Vienna. The funeral was attended by a vast crowd of music lovers, and many deputations from Germany, Austria, and Hungary.

Monsieur Antonin Dvorak came from Prague, and the number of wreaths was so enormous that six carriages, besides the hearse, were crowded with them.

The Singverein, the Sing Academie, the Gesellschaft von Musikfreunde, were all very largely represented. Thus Brahms was greatly honoured in death as in life, and by his compositions acquired immortality even in this life.

Damocles, or the Gates of Janus.

By THEODORA CORRIE.

Author of "IN SCORN OF CONSEQUENCE," "PETRONELLA DARCY,"

"ONLY THE AYAH," etc., etc.

CHAPTER V.

DURING the next few days Henrietta often looked at her beautiful languid mother with increased wistfulness. Ever since May's absence, constitutional indolence, fully encouraged, had grown upon Mrs. Godwin to a very great extent. She seldom came downstairs till two o'clock, and always had a siesta after tea. Sometimes she allowed Henrietta to play on the piano, or to read aloud for half an hour: but the books selected were all of a second-rate character: harmless, but mawkish to the last degree: French stories translated, or Italian novels. Mrs. Godwin never read or spoke anything but her native tongue in private life, and despite her long residence at Godwin's Worthy, talked what her friends called the prettiest broken English imaginable. Most people would have found it exhausting to keep down to her level intellectually, and though love is proverbially blind, there were times when Henrietta felt cramped without fully realizing what was the matter. Mrs. Godwin could not be said to dislike her daughter. She looked upon her as a dear, good girl, sadly devoid of tact. Not to put too fine a point upon the matter, Henrietta represented a failure. Having once made an unpardonable mistake in presenting herself as a twin daughter, instead of appearing as a son, nothing remained to be done but to place the offending intruder among the many disappointments in the background of life, and to see that she remained there.

But alas! just before May's return home, Mrs. Godwin's feelings received an unexpected shock where the behaviour of her second daughter was concerned.

Henrietta, discovered one sunny afternoon, stitching away at a great heap of black material, owned, in answer to her mother's astonished questioning, that the work represented part of a frock for a village child; a little girl, one of a large family. The mother had

died of consumption, the father had lately been ill. The eldest daughter at home was a cripple with rheumatism, and too poorly off to put much of the work out : and in company with the Miss Swanns, Henrietta had been helping to get the hurried mourning ready.

"And since when have you turned dressmaker to the village?" asked Mrs. Godwin.

"Oh, mamma, I never thought of it in that light," said Henrietta eagerly. "Miss Lavender looked so overdone yesterday, I took this skirt away from her. I was so glad to be able to help. I am just going round to the Nutshell, I shall be home again by tea time, for I have quite finished now," and with pardonable pride she held up the black garment for inspection.

But with all an Italian's superstitious dislike of the symbols of woe, Mrs. Godwin glanced at the sombre piece of work.

"I will not have you going round to the Nutshell again," she said. "I do not approve of your carrying parcels. If the work is finished I will send it by the garden boy." Ringing the bell, she gave the necessary order, while Henrietta stood by in silence, a little disappointed, but too intent upon various other ideas to attempt any form of argument about so small a matter.

"I wish, dear mamma," she began presently, "that you would let me help Miss Swann sometimes."

"In what way?" said Mrs. Godwin.

"Miss Swann has a class for the village girls, mamma. She reads aloud to them every Sunday afternoon. Her voice has not been strong lately, and she has done so much for me, I should so like to help her with some of her parish work. She always visits nearly every house in the village once a month, to change the book bags, and I want to go round with her. I am sure the bags are too heavy for her to carry without help. She seems so tired now on those days ; it would be different if I went with her. And then, too, on Saturdays, the girls always carry flowers off with them to dress the graves for Sunday ; Miss Lavender's garden is not a large one, and we have such quantities of roses doing nothing here. I should like to give some away every Saturday, when I go to the class."

Here Henrietta paused for lack of breath, while her mother looked at her in displeased surprise. "Really, my dear, I cannot imagine what has put such ideas into your head. I suppose Miss Swann has talked you into it all."

"It was I who talked her into it, I think, mamma, and I do so very much wish to help her."

"I am sorry for that, Henrietta, for it is altogether out of the question. Miss Swann has no right to undertake more work than she is fit for, in order to shift it upon other shoulders. No, my dear, I will not have you interrupt me. I am very sorry, as I said before, to disappoint you, but I can't have you go mixing yourself up with the peasants. It is all very well for governess-sort of people like the Miss Swanns, but quite a different thing for you. I will not have you behaving like a curate, all of a sudden, carrying parcels of books from house to house, in the hot weather, and getting tanned and over-heated, and being intimate with the villagers, and turning milliner to save lazier fingers. Why, your cheeks are quite flushed, and I am sure that your back is aching. Fancy a great-granddaughter of the Fontana's associating with all the riff-raff of Godwin's Worthy. I really could not allow it."

Henrietta looked terribly disappointed. "Cousin Evelyn visits in all the cottages, mamma. Miss Swann wouldn't take me where the people weren't respectable, and she was so pleased with the idea of my coming. You see there is no lady to do anything at the Rectory, now that Mr. Prosser is a widower. And though cousin Evelyn is always kind, she is often away, though she manages to do a great deal, especially among the navvies. There are so many at work on the new line now."

"Evelyn thinks herself a sufficiently great lady to do anything she likes, my dear child, and it is useless your quoting her to me. She is the last person whose example I should wish you to imitate. No! it is of no use continuing this discussion. You are giving me quite a headache, and don't look so absurdly disappointed. Once for all I will not allow you to have anything to do with the peasants."

When Mrs. Godwin spoke in this tone of voice Henrietta knew that resistance would be unavailing. Since the earliest days of her childhood, the idea of rebelling against her mother's authority had been an impossible one. She gave in now without further protest; but she could not quite keep the unusual tears from her eyes, and Mrs. Godwin noting them felt unaccountably taken aback.

"I have no objection to your giving away any flowers that will not be missed," she said in a more gracious voice. "I do not mean

that you may have all the village children up, and turn the garden into a playground; but you may take Miss Swann some flowers every week, if you like, so long as you do not cut anything from the hot-houses. Dressing graves seems to me to be a very morbid idea for young people, and surely the poor can grow flowers for themselves."

"Some of them do," said Henrietta, "but others have only just a plot for their carrots and cabbages."

"I don't want all these details," said Mrs. Godwin languidly. "I hope that needlework did not come from any cottage. One never knows where infection may linger. I wish you would not bring things here without consulting me first of all. You must tell Miss Swann that you will be unable to undertake anything more of the kind. You had better come downstairs now, and read and play to me for a little while. I consider that Miss Lavender has behaved in a very thoughtless manner—really presuming; but you cannot quite tell her that."

By this time, Henrietta realised that argument would be worse than useless. With the permission about the flowers she was fain to rest content. Perhaps the chief reason for Mrs. Godwin's emphatic prohibition might have been traced to a morbid fear of a possible risk of infection. Years ago, through the imprudence of a servant, May had once caught scarlet fever from a village girl. From this time forward the children's nurse had received strict orders to keep out of all cottages, Mrs. Godwin being convinced that every kind of disease lurked in the village. This idea having once taken root, she held to it tenaciously. But to sit like an Eastern Princess watching the workers of the earth, hearing the sob of misery, or the cry for aid, with careless ears, could never be Henrietta's rôle. The thought of pain could only be made bearable to her by the power of helping it.

In silence she followed her mother downstairs to the drawing-room, and mechanically prepared to read aloud. But the expression of her face made Mrs. Godwin uneasy for once, and some instinct led her to temporise. "Directly I have arranged for May's future," she said, "I shall see about yours, Henrietta, and when you are once married you will be able to go anywhere you like, within reasonable limits. But till then, my dear, you must let me judge what is best for you. Cottage visiting can never be suitably taken

up by unmarried women till they have reached middle age. To my mind, English people manage their daughters' affairs very badly, and girls are kept far too long in the school-room. When I was eighteen, I had been married for more than a year. May will be home directly, and that will give you plenty to think about. Put it all out of your head now, and let us finish our book."

"I suppose many young girls take up these ideas," she reflected, as Henrietta began obediently reading. "Hetty thinks too much. If she were a Roman Catholic, now, she would be turning devote. Fortunately I can always manage her; there is nothing like strong influence. But I wonder what had put this craze into her head all of a sudden."

Mrs. Godwin would have wondered still more could she have realised the amount of disappointment at work in Henrietta's heart. There was a depth of passionate feeling in her nature never yet fathomed by her mother. The old semi-Italian, semi-Greek spirit, only partially subdued, held in check by a silken rein of love. What if years of careless, heartless driving should make a break in the rein? Obedience had so far been a part of the very warp and woof of the girl's life, and Mrs. Godwin, like a parasitic plant, had a faculty for stifling the life out of everything round which she twined herself. But though the fettering of some natures is painless, even voluntary, with Henrietta it would mean nothing less than moral murder, or a fight to the death. Far off on the horizon the first clouds of a storm were rising. Vainly the girl strove to turn her attention to the adequate, and expressive rendering of the final chapters of an Italian translation of the "*Romance of the Forest*." It was very difficult to do justice to prose of this kind, and almost impossible to get up any reasonable interest in the woes and fainting fits of Adelaide.

The reading once over, Henrietta moved to the piano. Mrs. Godwin rather liked dance music when it was softly played. It generally lulled her to sleep at the end of the first ten minutes. But to-day, Henrietta forgot herself and wandered from waltzes to improvising, while her thoughts kept time to her fingers. She must not visit the poor till she was elderly or married. Middle age seemed to be a long way off, the lifetime of her present years over again, and matrimony only a vague idea in a dream. "If ever I do marry," she reflected, "I must live close to Godwin's Worthy. I couldn't

bear to go without seeing mamma every day." The thought troubled her. It seemed to demolish a portion of that fairy castle which she so often erected in the near present, only to see it again and again swept into the distance by her mother. "I wish I could grow older and wiser quicker," she thought, as her fingers wandered over the keys.

"My dear child," Mrs. Godwin presently remarked, "I don't know whose composition you are playing, but it is a most depressing piece of music. You had better go out and get some air. Start my musical box off for me; I shall be quite glad of a few cheerful airs. I can't think why it is, but, whenever you are with me for any time you always give me a headache." She flirted scent on her handkerchief as she spoke, and pressed one hand to her forehead. Henrietta felt remorseful; some people always have the knack of putting others in the wrong. An outsider might have taken in the tableau before him at a glance—the temperature at nearly 80, the sickly, sentimental novel on the table, the hot-house flowers, the shaded light; and against this the young girl with energetic life and loveliness in every line of her face and figure, life caught up and imprisoned, moving restlessly, looking out from the "wooden bars." A deer and a canary, and the deer could so easily have trampled on the canary!

"Go out of doors, and get some fresh air," Mrs. Godwin repeated, "and blow away your cobwebs."

Henrietta rose then, left the room, and went bare-headed into the garden. Passing the sun-dial and the upper terraces she took her way to the back of the house by a winding path to her own favourite haunt, half orchard ground, half flower garden, surrounded on three sides by an old, moss-grown wall, with rough steps in the corner angles of its brickwork; and a fine view from its top commanding the north-west. Here Henrietta often climbed to see the sunset. Besides, independently of the view, the place had a charm of its own. Apple and pear and medlar trees stood up in full bloom, and "all the grassy floor" seemed strewn with fallen petals. Rows of iris were pushing their green shafts through the brown earth of a square border which completely surrounded the trees. A narrow grass path divided this border from another one, dug under the wall, where grew many of those old-world flowers which vanish every winter and reappear every spring at their own sweet will.

There was a honeysuckle hedge just now coming into leaf, to face which, Henrietta every year sowed a hedge of sweet peas all round the fruit trees: otherwise no new comers disturbed the citizens of the soil. Through every season this part of the garden had a story for those that could read it. From its wild, heavy scented grape hyacinths, dropped here centuries ago, sure sentinels and heralds of some old Roman encampment buried far below. From its scarlet-seeded Jerusalem lilies, and its celestial flowers, brought over to England from Palestine, down to its York and Lancaster and damask roses; to the wallflowers which flourished in the old brickwork, and to the double polyanthus and spring hose-in-hose, which were just now scenting the air with their fragrance. But for once the garden appealed to Henrietta all in vain.

Pacing up and down the grass, her head bent, her hands lightly clasped, the girl paid no heed to the flowers, or the "sweet influences" of the spring evening. After a while, however, she became conscious of another person's presence, and looking up saw Paul leaning against the gnarled trunk of an apple tree, his eyes, in absent fashion, following her as she moved to and fro between the flowers. She came up to him at last, laid a light hand on his shoulder, and said, "Paul, I have a question to ask of you. What makes you so contented with your present life just as it is?"

"The certainty of losing it," he answered, half beneath his breath.

But Henrietta could not catch this remark, and after a moment repeated her question: "What makes you so contented and me so like the Dryad?"

He looked at her affectionately. "You could never really be like her, Hetty. You forget, the Dryad had no soul."

Henrietta sighed. "There is a bit of paganism in me, nevertheless," she said, "a touch of old Rome or Athens. I want to understand things as I go along. I want to act now. I feel as if I could not endure the delays of life. I want to leave my tree to go out into the world, Paul."

Paul shook his head. "Believe me, Hetty, the kind of life for which you crave will never bring you nearer to happiness than you stand at this moment. What makes you long to go out into the world all of a sudden?"

"The thought of all the pain in it, Paul. It is not for happiness

that I would go, but for sorrow. I daresay some phlegmatic people wouldn't understand me," she went on, "but I believe I am capable of feeling more pleasure and pain in one day than some people experience in the whole of their colourless lives put together. I shall never live to be old so far as mere years count. I live too fast in myself. I would pray give me life and liberty, the kind of life for which I crave, if only for one day, in which I could say, 'I have lived.' For, Paul, the thought of all the unheeded pain in some lives is unbearable. It makes one almost feel as if one could break one's heart or go mad over it."

She paused here, suddenly, startled at the effect of her words upon her companion.

"Hetty," he said; "Hetty." There was a dismayed sound in his voice that she could not understand. He took a turn up the path and then came back to her; and when he spoke again it was with a look of mingled apprehension and incredulity on his face, a look that might almost have belonged to an old man.

"If you have begun to realise it I can well believe that to you the mere thought of suffering is torture," he said. "Yet believe me, Hetty, life's battlefield is a far more terrible place for the onlookers than for those who are fighting or tending the wounded. All pain should become more bearable if one can do something to help it; but to say that one cannot bear the thought of it, *that* is cowardice; and to say that you will never live to be old is just where you are making a mistake. It is only another way of confessing that you expect circumstances to be too strong for you, and you are made of better stuff than that, Hetty. You are wrong if you fancy that the stress of life can only be endured by phlegmatic natures and that it kills the sensitive ones. It is generally in books that people die young of broken hearts or of disappointed ambitions, not in real life. Trouble and trial don't kill, as a rule, for a very long time indeed. And *bon gré, mal gré* as the years go by, we most of us get through an amount of mental and physical suffering that we should reckon altogether impossible at the start. It seems to me that willingly or unwillingly we are all bound for affliction's furnace; and whether we come out better or worse, stronger or weaker, depends very much on the spirit in which we go in. You remember what others have said better than I can say it—that one should try to be affected by everything in the right way; to husband

one's powers; and to master the strength of each impression made upon us by circumstances."

He paused here, and looking at her pleadingly said:—

"Princess, you will find that the furnace comes in sight all too soon for most of us without our hastening to meet it. The battlefield for men and women is no fit place for children. You are young yet to worry your head about the outside world. I hope that it may be a long time before you have much pain or sorrow to undergo or to share with other people. You have your gardening, your books and your music. Believe me nature and books and music are three guardian angels. Can't you try to be content with learning what they can teach you? Other lives will join yours soon enough. Why should you grudge to yourself your own innocent pleasures, and deny to those who love you the joy of keeping you sheltered and happy as long as such sheltered happiness is possible?"

Henrietta's head drooped. "As long as it is possible, yes," she said; "but if it is impossible? I am not a child any longer, Paul. Perhaps I am foolish though to make such a fuss, and to seem so discontented all of a sudden. It is only that I wanted to help Miss Lavender, and mamma thinks that I am too young for cottage visiting. My life has looked so selfish to me lately. I wish that I could do anything to help other people."

"Yes, I understand," said Paul, in rather a surprised voice; "but it seems to me that my aunt is right, Hetty; and as for visiting or helping poor people, there are just as many sad rich ones in the world; begin on them first. To go no further than your aunt Catherine: hers is a sad life, hardly likely to last many years longer, so far as one can judge; and there is my father. If you were to look after his study as you look after my attic, and put a flower on his desk every day, it would please him, I am sure."

"Would he really like it?" she asked, wistfully. "I heard mamma say one day that he couldn't bear to find other people in his library."

"You just try," said Paul, smiling; then his face growing graver, he turned his head away in the direction of the park. "There's Ted," he said. "He came back last night. You can do many things for him that no one else can."

"Ted," said Henrietta, thoughtfully. "*Sanssouci*? Some people

would say that he hadn't a care in the world now that he is so much stronger."

"Hasn't he?" queried Paul, in his quietest voice. "True, he is stronger, but that will never mean that he is quite strong, I am afraid. Do you suppose that it is nothing to him that he can never take more than a five-mile walk, when other men do their twenty or thirty easily; that he can very seldom carry his own gun, and will never ride to hounds again? You don't understand Ted, Hetty, very few people do."

He paused for a long minute, while his eyes came back to her face and wandered from it to the pear tree under which she was standing. The wind, playing among the blossoming boughs, scattered the milky white flower-petals on the bright rings of her hair. "As for being useful," he ended, "all things have their use. What would you say to the trees if they were so anxious to bear fruit that they refused to blossom first of all, or to enjoy the sun and the wind and the dew."

Henrietta smiled, then sighed. "I feel very stupid to-day," she said. "I can't quite explain myself. It is only natural that you shouldn't quite understand me. But, all the same, I see what you mean. I see and I will try to remember." She turned away and left him; and he made no attempt to follow her, only stood watching the light figure till it disappeared from sight.

But if Henrietta could have seen the look on his face she would have come straight back again. This life is very like the tower of Babel. We are all condemned to talk different languages, and sympathy doesn't invariably give one a pass-key, or if one possesses a key it isn't always safe to make use of it.

"So, I don't understand her," said Paul to himself. "It's a very good rôle to follow, if I can only keep to it."

CHAPTER VI.

ON a lovely evening in spring, May returned to Godwin's Rest. Henrietta was standing at the hall door when the carriage drove up, and unselfish in her affection brought the traveller straight to the drawing room.

For once Mrs. Godwin left the sofa, coming forward in haste,

clasping May close, with eager kisses, and gazing the while with mingled surprise and approval at the very fashionable young lady now standing before her.

May returned the embrace French fashion, next presented her cheek to her uncle, then releasing herself stretched out both arms with a gesture of relief.

"I am tired and thirsty, and dusty and hot, almost too hot to be kissed," she said, tossing her pretty hat upon the sofa, and looking about her with bright, rather amused eyes.

"Dear me! how strange it seems to be back. I felt like Rip Van Winkle when Paul came up to me first of all in the station. I scarcely recognised him, he has grown so imposing."

"If that speech is to be taken in a complimentary sense, allow me to return it," said Paul, smiling.

"No one ever called me imposing before," said May. She sat down now in an armchair, leaned her head comfortably back and regarded her cousin with a meditative air.

"He has grown up most wonderfully handsome," she thought. "His eyes are altogether too fine for a man. They are even better than mine, which is saying a good deal. But he looks too grave, he wants waking up; I daresay they all do."

Aloud she said: "Perhaps, Paul, you will give me some tea next. Go and pour it out for me, Henrietta, there's a dear. You can't think how nice it is to see an English meal again."

Paul rose at once; it was nearly ten o'clock; but cold chicken and tongue stood ready for the traveller on a side table, together with the tea equipage.

Since her entrance May seemed to have become the centre of attraction to everyone in the room. Though very small and slender in figure it was not likely that she would ever pass unnoticed. A quantity of fair hair, piled high in soft coils; a brilliant pink and white complexion; a small nose, "tip-tilted"; and fairy-like hands and feet, made up her principal attractions; while in startling, yet undeniably piquant contrast to her fair skin, she possessed a pair of black eyes, black-lashed and keen as a bird's, surmounted by delicately pencilled eyebrows. All the freshness of youth was on her face. Her smiles were frequent, and the least giving-way of the lips showed her pretty teeth. There was something foreign in the movement of her hands and in her vivacious manner; but her

voice was low and soft, and her self-possession seemed perfect. If Senancour's saying be true—"Tout depend d'une certaine confiance en nous-mêmes"—then May had little to fear in the present or in the future.

She prattled on now about her journey, of the dust, the slowness of the trains, and the rough crossing, giving it as her opinion that the people who suffered from *mal-de-mer* should all wear a ticket and be kept in a separate boat by themselves. Finally, having exhausted her travels and all attendant discomforts in smiling fashion, she began to ask questions and to demand the local news.

"Your cousin Evelyn is at the Chase already," said Mrs. Godwin. "She went up for the season as usual, but a narrow escape of typhoid obliged her to come back to the country, by the doctor's orders, though she is hardly likely to spend the whole summer here."

"Yes, and cousin Sol came back last week, too," said Henrietta, laughingly; "he is beginning to grumble already. He wants to persuade Uncle John to go yachting for nine months in the year instead of for five. Aunt Catherine is still at the Grange, and mamma's cousin, M. de Brie, is staying with her, and several other people."

"Why isn't Aunt Catherine in town, Hetty, she ought to be at this time of the year?"

"Your aunt has not been well," said Mrs. Godwin. "It is the old complaint, something wrong with the heart, I believe; but you know nothing puts her out so much as enquiries of any sort. She never poses as an invalid in the fashion that your cousin Evelyn has begun to affect."

"Evelyn never posed as anything that I am aware of," said Godwin, dryly.

Mrs. Godwin slightly shrugged her shoulders, while May said: "But, mamma, won't Aunt Catherine be going up for part of the season this year?"

"No, May, I believe not."

"How tiresome! I wanted her to present me, and Henrietta too."

"To present you, my dear?"

"Why not?" said May, tranquilly. "I don't suppose that you are up to much gaiety, mamma, certainly not to taking a house in town, which is what I should like. Aunt Catherine might just as

well have chaperoned us. We should have made Belgrave Square much livelier for her."

"I have no doubt that you would," said her uncle smiling.

"There will be no London gaiety for either of you poor children this year," said Mrs. Godwin. "You must get what happiness you can out of the country. If your uncle takes you up to see the pictures, it will be the utmost that you must expect."

There was something so markedly disagreeable both in her face and voice that May noticed it directly. Godwin said nothing, only picked up a newspaper and began reading it with a slight indrawing of his lower lip. But silence seemed to have fallen on the party, which was broken by Henrietta's eager voice.

"We shall have plenty of gaiety here, mamma, when once we begin to go about. The cathedral and college people don't go away till the fashionables are just coming back. The bishop's wife is very kind and pleasant. I met her the other day, for we travelled together when Uncle John and I went to town a fortnight ago, on a shopping expedition. She said, May, that she hoped we should be able to come to see her next month, when the choral festival takes place. Besides we have one big party in prospect for next Monday, at the Grange. Cousin Sol is giving a musical 'at home.'"

"For the benefit of the unenlightened, I suppose," said May with a little *moue*.

"There is to be a dinner party first," said her mother.

"You can make your first appearance there better than anywhere else, since town is out of the question. Your aunt never gives small dinners. She asked Henrietta first of all, and I accepted for you, May. Probably your aunt did not know that you would be back again. And then she called, and said that Henrietta must come too, or else she wouldn't have you; dear Aunt Catherine is so quaint."

"About as quaint as the sphinx," said Godwin, *sotto voce*.

Mrs. Godwin seemed oblivious of the gathering cloud on her brother-in-law's brow, but May noticing it immediately, deftly changed the subject. She had finished her nondescript meal by this time, and with evident willingness presently met her mother's next suggestion that she had better go to bed.

It was past eleven o'clock when the two sisters went upstairs together, but even then Henrietta lingered, delighted to have someone to wait upon. She helped her sister to undress with an

air of pretty interest, interest deepening presently into a slight perplexity.

Once seated in an easy chair in the bedroom, May did not appear to be very sleepy, and seemed in no hurry to say good-night. Pulling down her hair, she began plaiting it into any number of tight little tails, carefully damping each plait.

"To-morrow will be Sunday," she remarked. "I always crimp up on Saturday nights, and particularly to-night. You are a luckier girl than I am. If I only had your forehead, like an old Greek or rather like a young one, and all your curly locks, I should be perfectly contented with my own appearance?"

Henrietta looked affectionately at her sister.

"Why, May, your hair is lovely. You have the prettiest fringe imaginable."

"By the aid of tongs," said May. "Sit down there, Rietta, I want to talk. Can you keep a secret, I wonder?"

"Oh, yes, May, I suppose I could, but I have never tried yet. You enjoyed your tour in the Black Forest, didn't you?"

"Yes, Mrs. Strafford was very kind, and Patrick, Captain Strafford I mean, was even nicer than the tour, which is saying a great deal."

"Captain Strafford, I don't remember your mentioning him, May."

May laughed.

"He, and Mrs. Strafford, and Ella and I used to have delightful rides," she said. "He gave me that dear little whip," abandoning her hair and picking up a pretty gold-mounted cane from the tray of her open box.

"I am so glad that he is a cousin of cousin Evelyn's. We shall see him over here on Monday, I expect. He asked me what my home was like. He draws very well, and my description of the scenery seemed to take his fancy, not to speak of the old house. Godwin's Rest is a picturesque old place, with a picturesque view, you know," she ended demurely, though a suspicious curve at the corners of her mouth indicated mischief.

"But, May, is this Captain Strafford going to stay at the Chase?" asked Henrietta in some bewilderment.

"Oh, yes, he has been abroad for his health, on leave, but he seems nearly well again now. He thinks that a month or two in England will quite set him up again, and that the country is at its

best in May apparently. We only parted company at the station. He will be staying at the Chase for the present."

"Did you travel—?" Henrietta began, then stopped while May laughed outright.

"Oh, no, I travelled nominally with Fraulein Sandiekatze, a most learned lady, who has come to England to give a series of lectures on the great Jean Paul. She was an excellent escort, buried in her books in the train, and quite incapable on board the boat. Patrick, Captain Strafford I mean, enlivened the way wonderfully. The poor 'Sandcat' was so overcome while we crossed that she just sat at one end of the boat, and groaned. He was very good to her. He went half-a-dozen times to get brandy, or hard biscuits, or soda water and other things; but dear me! she was perfectly lemon-coloured by the time we landed. I must own that I was a little surprised when Captain Strafford appeared at the first halt on our journey, and so was my duenna: but he said that he had important business in England, on urgent private affairs. He did that part very well," May ended half to herself.

Henrietta was silent, a vague feeling of discomfort stealing over her, while May's talk soon flowed on again.

"He is very good-looking, and well connected, and all that, and his battery is at Gibraltar. He goes back there in two months for a little time, and then he talks of selling out, or retiring, or whatever it is called. He has great expectations: but I should like to see 'Gib' immensely. I should die of ennui in six months here." She was twirling the little whip round and round upon her fingers now, but she might almost as well have struck Henrietta with it. This last speech betrayed such a lack of affection, or rather so much carelessness of the feelings of other people.

"But, May," said Henrietta, getting in a word at last, and startled by this double declaration. "You don't mean that you—that Captain Strafford, I mean—"

The blundering sentence remained unfinished, for May suddenly bent forward and kissed both the flushed cheeks opposite.

"You dear old-fashioned darling, I don't mean anything, and I cannot possibly answer for Captain Strafford. Men are so inconsequent at the best of times; but if you must hear the truth, I suppose, now I come to think of it, that I have as good as said 'yes' to him, by giving him leave to come over here. He is every-

thing that is desirable, Rietta. He has large private means from an old uncle, besides his pay. I like gold mountings," appreciatively regarding the whip. "Why Hetty, you don't look a scrap pleased. What possible fault can you find with a man like Captain Strafford?"

"You have left out the only thing that I should care about," said Henrietta with a little quiver in her voice.

May looked at her, tied another pigtail, and then said:

"Well, I don't exactly hate him. He is quite the nicest person I have ever met, so far: for he lets me have my own way in everything, and that is just what I have been trying for unsuccessfully all my life. Shall I do another plait, or do you think six will be enough?"

"But," said Henrietta, ignoring this question, and more bewildered than ever, "I can't remember that you ever mentioned Captain Strafford in any of your letters to mamma."

"Of course I never mentioned him. I kept it for a surprise," said May airily.

Henrietta sighed. "I expect mamma will be very much surprised, and, oh, May, I am half afraid that she won't be at all pleased either."

Apparently this view of the case had never struck May before.

"I hope you don't mean that there will be a fuss," she said. "Really I don't see what possible objection mamma can make to him. He neither gambles, nor gets into debt: indeed he has been a model of propriety all his life; only he will ride in steeple-chases. He has had his collar-bone broken twice, not to speak of half his ribs. I do trust that mamma will not take a dislike to him, for it is quite too late now to alter things."

"All the same I do wish that you could have mentioned it," said her sister, who had good reason for feeling perturbed.

"Would you like me to have mentioned the French music teacher, too," said May, divided between a strong desire to laugh, and some other feeling which struggled with it. He wrote me a frantic farewell the week I left school. He said I was as cold and as distant as the moon, and he declared his intention of dying, or some such nonsense, in order to fill the aching void left by my disappearance. Monsieur Gresset is so melodramatic. It is not the person that he cares about, but the way in which one plays. He

would fall in love with a phonograph of Arabella Goddard, if he could afford to buy up her fingers in a bottled state. Oh, Rietta, don't look at me as if I were a new kind of puzzle, or your eyes will drop out. Why have you grown so dreadfully proper during my absence?"

Then suddenly her mood changed. Sitting down in her sister's lap, and twining both arms round her neck she said: "They teach more things at school than you have learnt in the woods, little sister. It is a different setting altogether, and I cannot get back into my old place somehow."

Henrietta returned the caress clingingly. "I wish that you had never gone away, White May."

"Perhaps I ought to echo the wish, but somehow I can't," said May. "To change the subject, whatever makes mamma keep the house like a cucumber frame for heat? It is enough to choke one. I only wonder how you all stand it."

"Mamma is so sensitive, May, her throat is weak, and she catches cold so easily."

"The very way to make her worse then," said May, "and not half so bad for her as for all the rest of us. I really cannot stand being boiled every evening. There is nothing more dangerous than an over-heated atmosphere."

"Mamma could not bear a change. She is not so strong as you think, May."

"Stove plants never are. She looks well, what do you call it—etiolated."

"You cannot turn a stove plant into a hardy one," said Henrietta, half indignant at May's manner.

"Not when the gardener is so tender-hearted. There, Rietta, we will not fall out over mamma the first evening: only if she wishes to see much of me she must not send the thermometer up to eighty. Fancy having fires this weather! how you stand it yourself, I cannot imagine."

"The drawing-room is such a large room," said Henrietta, "and I think there must be a good bit of Italy in my composition. I can stand any amount of heat. Oh, May! how nice it is to see you sitting there, and how delightful it will be to go about together."

"Wonderful confession!" said May. "I do believe you are

beginning to pine at last for a little rational society, and that you may actually be getting tired of your trees and woods."

"No," said Henrietta, "it is not that. I love the woods more than ever."

"All the same, something has altered you: you look waked up."

"I think I am waked up thoroughly," said Henrietta. "I am sure I shall like going about."

"There is very little doubt about that," said May smiling. "I don't mean to go anywhere without you this summer, which is generous of me. I wonder if you know in the least how good-looking you are."

Henrietta blushed, lifted up her head, and regarded her sister with amused eyes.

"Yes, I know that I am pretty," she said simply, "and I am very glad of it. Paul said something about it the other day, and mamma told me last week that I was a plain likeness of my Italian great-grandmother, who was a most celebrated beauty: but I would rather be thought like the Godwins."

"Paul first," May thought, "mamma last." But something in the expression of the face opposite to her restrained all outward expression of this reflection. Aloud she only said that the Italian great-grandmother must have been a very enviable woman, and then, having satisfactorily finished her hair plaiting, tripped off to bed, while Henrietta went to her own little room, to toss about, unable to sleep, with a mind full of wonder and perplexity over the sister that school had sent back to her. True the germ had been there, but the growth of some natures is amazingly quick, and May had returned home "educated" in more senses than the word usually implies.

Henrietta knew by intuition that May's revelations would be anything but pleasing to her mother. Under Mrs. Godwin's languor lay hidden a great deal of persistence, and an amount of ambition that few people could have fathomed.

For the first year after her marriage she had reigned supreme as mistress of The Chase, for her father-in-law was a widower, and John unmarried. Her husband's love had brought her a princely establishment, carriages, horses, and fine clothes: everything in fact best suited to her ease-loving luxurious nature.

But with the elder Mr. Godwin's death, and the crash that

followed it, came the end of her magnificence. Such a woman could never sink contentedly into the position of a poor man's wife, or go about to small parties, generally in the same dress, and contentedly on a level with her neighbours.

No. Mrs. Godwin followed her husband to Italy, and after his death returned to England with her brother-in-law's permission, to occupy Godwin's Rest in his absence; veiling her bitter disappointment, and with some cleverness merely shifting her position.

No longer able to pose as a pattern of luxury, and bid others admire, she now took her stand on a platform of lofty grief. Not over her lost wealth, that must never be hinted at, but over what had followed this first catastrophe: the death of her husband, the war, and her exile, as she termed it, from the land of her birth. By her own account nothing but a strong sense of duty kept her in England to manage her poor brother's household, and to see to his comfort. To him she devoted the wreck of her life. For the rest, she wrote reams of Italian poetry, bringing it out at her own expense, as no publisher seemed to appreciate the beauties of her style. She was a rising author, according to her friends, and one or two of her books generally lay about on the drawing-room table in dainty and tasteful bindings, admired but unread; few people in the neighbourhood being sufficiently well acquainted with Italian to pose as critics. Meanwhile, drawing rapidly nearer, she pictured a future which would see the Dower House, the original family residence, restored to more than its former splendour, and the Chase and its present owner completely eclipsed by the superior magnificence of Godwin's Rest.

(To be continued.)

The Face and Its Revelations.

By MAUD WHEELER.

ALTHOUGH compulsory education is now an accomplished fact, and the standard of general education of the up-to-date girl covers so large a field of knowledge, there is still one important study omitted,

which for practical use and helpfulness is second to none. To the man who wishes to avoid many serious mistakes in life, and the woman many a heartache, how all important is a knowledge of the character and tastes of those who daily cross their path, with whom either the pursuit of business or pleasure throws them into contact. No one surely would question the late poet laureate's remark:—

"How often do we forge a life-long trouble for ourselves

By taking true for false and false for true";

and how bitter it is to be deceived by those we trust most, many can testify. Yet how few ever seek to gain a true conception of those with whom they associate, as though forsooth it were a waste of time and trouble. With some persons this deficiency—the lack of an accurate standard by which to measure the personality of those who make up their environment—is happily supplemented, to a very large extent, by intuition. But even were this sense of discernment more general it would still be inadequate as a revealer of character, and this for two reasons.

In the first place, comparatively few of those who possess intuitive perception are aware of the great value of this mysterious faculty, and rarely trust themselves entirely to its guidance, failing to realise that nature is a much truer diviner of human character than reason can ever hope to be. They consequently either ignore this great gift or allow other considerations and side influences to bias their judgement, and are carried away by an attractive manner or a pleasing appearance. The second weak point as regards intuition is its limitation, so that even in cases where the inner and finer perceptions are not distorted or misled by preconceived notions or exterior influences, the instinctive dislike or distrust of any particular individual is of a vague and unsatisfactory character, too indefinite to be of practical value or put to wide use in affairs of moment, as the engaging of servants, employées, or in the gravest choice of all—a life partner.

Though intuition is so limited in its sphere of usefulness, we have a sure and infallible guide to character in the face, which to those who can read the writing of Nature lies like an open book, revealing the soul within. The great majority, however, go about with closed eyes, unobservant of the startling revelations that surround them.

The great discovery of the eminent German physician, Dr. Gall

—nearly a century ago—that signs of character exist in the brain, was at one time treated with derision, and the designation “bumpology” contemptuously applied to the study of phrenology. Even now, amongst men and women who are ignorant of the first principles of phrenology, the idea largely exists that it is by means of depressions and elevations on the surface of the skull that the phrenologist is guided to his conclusions. Nothing could be more erroneous or absurd. It is only by an estimation of the size of the head, from the opening of the ear to the crown of the head, and again from the same apex of the ear to the back of the head, that phrenological conclusions are based.

The thickness of the skull, therefore, which varies in different parts of the head, is no obstacle to the phrenologist. All he needs to discover is whether the head is most developed in the upper portion or the base, in front of the ears or at the back.

The greater the distance from the tip of the ear to the crown of the head the more ideal is the subject: and the breadth of the face from ear to ear is also of great significance. A face that is wide in the middle section, *i.e.*, across the ears, measuring from the tips, denotes a selfish and materialistic nature, particularly if the lobes of the ears are large and heavy. This is clearly shown in the animal world—the bull-dog, tiger and eagle being broad in that portion of the face, types of cruelty and savageness—while in direct contrast to these we find hares, deer and sheep with thin narrow heads, and corresponding gentle and docile natures. Just above and behind the ear, extending backwards, the organ of destructiveness is situated, which gives executive ability and the force to carry out whatever is undertaken. These are the hard workers of the world, the indomitable persistent strugglers, who know what they want and determine to get it. Immediately in front of the ear we have the organ of alimentativeness, imparting a keen appreciation of the pleasures of the table. When the organ is well developed it gives a full appearance to the face in front of the ears, instead of the depression at the side so often noticeable, and points to a due sense of the material needs of the body. Good cooks generally have this organ developed, and wherever it is present in any individual, he or she would always keep a good table, even if by reason of acquisitiveness they should prove stingy in other respects. The ear itself is indicative of character—large ears manifest a materialistic and coarse nature;

small ears, on the contrary, denote refinement and a less passionate nature. If they are small and lie close to the head, timidity and want of self-reliance are indicated, especially if they slope backwards. In the case of timid animals, such as hares and deer, this is very noticeable. The more erect the ear so much the more courage and force displayed; and these qualities are developed to aggressiveness when the ears not only stand upright but also out from the head. It is important to notice the distance between the ear and eye, as when there is a good breadth from the ear to the outer corner of the eye capacity and marked ability are shown. The tip of the ear should not rise above the level of the eye; where this is seen a hasty and revengeful nature may be inferred.

Passing on to the forehead the student of human nature should draw an imaginary horizontal line across, dividing it into two equal sections. In the upper portion we have comparison and reflection, so that if the forehead is full near the hair the subject will be of a philosophic reflective temperament, much given to weighing the pros and cons of any question, and consequently sometimes find a difficulty in arriving at any definite conclusion. In the lower portion of the forehead we have the perceptive faculties located, and when it is well developed above the eyebrows an observing and shrewd power of discernment is present. While a high forehead denotes the capacity for acquiring knowledge—and if rounded and prominent as well as high, benevolence and the religious sentiment—it is amongst the wide low brows that we must look for talent. More originality and brilliancy is found with this shaped forehead than with the more painstaking high type.

There are three types of foreheads—the perpendicular or straight, the retreating, and the projecting. The first of these is the most desirable, and if also square in contour points to firmness, a quality which is further accentuated by straight well-marked eyebrows. An arched forehead discloses more tenderness than force; sensitiveness is the attribute of the oval brow. Retreating foreheads—this does not include those which have a slight slope backwards—betray weak intellectual powers; and a narrow forehead has the same signification. Although wrinkles are so much dreaded, a smooth forehead without any lines or wrinkles betrays a hard unsympathetic nature. Perpendicular lines in the centre, above the nose, are a sign of concentration.

Leaving this portion of the face we come to the eyes, which are the most expressive of all the features and the most misleading. Large, round, open eyes invariably betray great interest in the opposite sex, but unless set close together in the face they do not necessarily imply voluptuousness; only persons with these eyes always prefer the companionship of the opposite sex to that of their own. The long almond-shaped eye—this appearance is really due to the shape of the eyelid and not the eye proper—is a mark of a crafty and cunning disposition; and if in the same face the eyebrows are seen to meet above the nose the subject is deceitful. Pale blue eyes are not at all to be desired, as their owners are not only weak and vacillating but also treacherous. Dark blue eyes are more trustworthy, and grey orbs point to a romantic nature. Green eyes are indicative of talent, while brown ones announce an affectionate and unselfish nature. Really black eyes are most uncommon, though many are so dark as to convey that impression, but fortunately there are very few of a decided black, and these reveal a very passionate and ardent temperament, and cannot safely be trusted. The eyebrows must not be overlooked, for they too have a tale to tell. Those that arch high above the eyes, disclose a weak and thoughtless character. Eyebrows lighter than the hair also imply weakness. The long sweeping eyebrows that run close to the outer corner of the eye, show an economical careful disposition, but if they curve over the eye and then describe an angular bend towards the bridge of the nose, a revengeful temper is present. Practical people have straight and rather thick eyebrows. We now come to the most prominent feature of the face, the nose, which has a great deal of information to convey. A nose that is flat at the root between the eyes, is a sign of a very short memory. The prominent hooked Roman nose indicates power, and a commanding disposition. The straight Greek nose is characteristic of refinement, and passive endurance. In striking contrast to the refined delicacy of the Grecian type we have the snub nose, which is associated with coarseness. If, however, there is a perceptible lump at the tip, an imaginative, often literary tendency may be recognised. A thin dropping nose usually accompanies a melancholy temperament, but when this feature is broad and thick, dropping at the tip, it is significant of sensualism. Curiosity is associated with a thin nose which turns up at the point. The space between the nose and

upper lip when long in proportion to the rest of the face gives great power of endurance, and should this section present a round and full appearance it is a sure sign of self-reliance and self-esteem. When there is a depression here want of self-reliance exists.

Much may be discovered from the mouth. Thin hard lips announce a hard unsympathetic nature, but well proportioned lips that close firmly—not tightly so as to give a compressed appearance—merely denote decision of character. When both lips are thick, sensuality must be inferred; an overhanging upper lip has quite a different meaning, and is the sign of a kindhearted well-disposed nature. A slightly protruding under lip is the badge of caution, and in such subjects the instinct of self-preservation will be strong. Firm lips with a deep indent in the centre of the upper lip, show great purity of thought and action. Should the lower lip besides protruding also hang down, the individual will lack decision, and be addicted to the pleasures of the table.

Passing from the mouth to the chin we find that a hard bony chin discloses firmness, particularly when the chin is square. Pointed chins are characteristic of selfishness, and should they project as well, they are designing and crafty. A cold unsympathetic disposition is discovered by a flat chin, and if high cheek bones are seen on the same face, stinginess must be looked for. Small short chins are an infallible indication of weakness, and if such chins retreat, obstinacy is always present.

In so small a space I have only been able to touch briefly on some of the most general and noticeable indications of character revealed by the face, much still remains to be said, particularly with regard to temperaments and adaptation in marriage. It is quite essential for the student, who would master the secrets of character, to have a thorough comprehension of the combination of faculties which give rise to various individual traits, and characteristics; and whoever really desires to gain an accurate estimation of their neighbour's character, must not rest satisfied with the recognition of a few general traits, but by observation and comparison acquire a discriminating judgment of human nature.

The Drama.

It is always a pleasant task to record the success of a good play, such as *The Physician* undoubtedly is. As the name suggests, the principal personage of the play is a physician, and Dr. Lewin Carey as personified by Mr. Charles Wyndham enacts the part to perfection. From the opening scene in the consulting room, to the closing act at the Vicarage, he never ceases to rivet the audience's attention; and in the Abbot's Kitchen at Fontleas, where the great mental struggle and climax of the play is reached, this clever actor shows himself complete master of the critical situation. Mr. Alfred Bishop as the Revd. Peregrine Hinde makes a most delightful charming old clergyman, and his happy rendering of the part leaves nothing to be desired. The rôle of the heartless coquette is carried off with good effect by Miss Marion Terry, though her rival the immaculate heroine—Miss Mary Moore, does not appear quite at home in the character of Edana Hinde.

The Princess and the Butterfly, or *The Fantastics* certainly merits its name, for the piece is a most fantastic travesty of nature. This does not lie so much in the play itself, as in the unfortunate distribution of characters to parts. For Mr. H. B. Irving to pose as a green youth, and Julia Neilson as a middle aged coquette, divests the love scenes between them of all semblance of reality. Mr. Irving, in spite of his clever acting, is not adapted to the part assigned him, and the beautiful Miss Neilson is obviously too young for the rôle she plays. The same incongruity of parts pertains with the rest of the cast, and Mr. George Alexander and Miss Fay Davis are equally unsuited to their parts. Yet without this combination of talent the play could not have met with the favour accorded to it.

Justin Huntley McCarthy's play, *My Friend the Prince*, will charm away a tedious evening. The amusing American millionaire, whose anxiety, as he expresses it "to hob-nob with the swells," leads him to figure so ludicrously, provoked many a hearty laugh, and indeed Mr. Fred Kaye, as the vulgar rich old man, is quite the most successful character of the piece. Mr. Paul Arthur, who is entertained by the millionaire as the supposed missing Prince, looks the part he plays far more than the real Prince, Mr. Percy Lyndal, who eventually throws off his disguise, and brings the piece to a happy conclusion. It is all very natural—minus the Prince—and very amusing.

M. W.

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